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ABSTRACT

This document is comprised of the two 2000 issues of a biannually-published journal featuring research studies, theoretical essays, and classroom practice articles about the development and education of kindergarten children as well as occasional articles concerning preschool and the early primary grades. The spring 2000 issue contains the following articles: (1) "Reflection, Dialogue, and Negotiation: Transforming Instructional Practices through Classroom Research" (Lynda D. Stone); (2) "Rules Are Made To Be Golden: A Qualitative Study of American and Japanese Children's Morals" (Satomi Izumi Taylor, Jeanne T. Wilson, Toshiko Kaneda, and Tetsuya Ogawa); (3) "Reading, Writing, Talking, Thinking, and Caring in the Kindergarten Classroom" (John Shefelbine, Cindy Litman, and Marilyn Wilson); and (4) "Readers Theatre: A Creative Tool for Strengthening Skills of Emergent Readers" (Michael Jordan and Adrienne Harrell). The fall-winter 2000 issue contains the following articles: (1) "Storytelling, The Cornerstone of Literacy" (Debra Weller); (2) "Self-Portraits of Kindergarten Children" (Hilda Present Lewis); and (3) "Collecting and Processing Words: Strategies for Building Vocabulary in Young Children" (Michael Jordan and Adrienne Herrell). (KB)

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Violet B. Robinson, Editor

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Reflection, Dialogue, and Negotiation: Transforming Instructional Practices Through Classroom Research

Lynda D. Stone

In this article, I discuss why an understanding of teacher beliefs is important to educational reform, why creating communities of inquiry promotes teacher development, and why viewing classrooms as cultural contexts is valuable. Ethnographic research techniques are offered as a means of creating inquiry communities in which teachers take on the role of researchers. A basic description of ethnographic research techniques is provided along with a complementary conceptual tool, Activity Theory. Finally, a brief discussion of what forms of internal and external support might work to promote teachers' ongoing development as teacher researchers is included.

Teachers change their practices daily. These changes, Cuban (1993) argues, have not resulted in a fundamental transformation of education. Further, Seymour Sarason (1990) contends that "To confuse change with progress is to confuse means with ends" (p. 8). If routine modifications in teaching strategies do not lead to innovative, or at least more productive, instructional practices, then the question arises, what can teachers do to enhance educational practice? How teachers might transform their instructional practices as they adapt to the local social, emotional, and cognitive context of the classroom is the focus of this article.

In an earlier issue of *Kindergarten Education, Theory, Research, and Practice* (Stone, 1999), I suggested that creating a collaborative and supportive inquiry-based learning community among teachers had the potential to reshape instructional practices. Nurturing learning communities in which teachers take leadership roles requires inquiry strategies that lend themselves to classroom life. In this article, I suggest that ethnography, an inquiry approach drawn from anthropology, is well suited for the study of educational settings. An ethnography is a form of qualitative research, that is, research grounded in the assumption that individuals construct social reality in the form of meanings and interpretations (Guba, 1990; Jessor, 1996; Neumann, 1997). Methods of collecting data in ethnographic studies are similar to what teachers currently do in schools, that is, carefully observe children, note changes in behavior over time (learning or not learning), and talk about these changes with colleagues. Although similar to teacher practices, ethnographies are a more formalized, systematic approach to observation and thus require learning new information and developing new skills. Teachers with whom I have worked have consistently reported that acquiring the skills of ethnographic research is at once exhilarating, exhausting, and transformative. These educators contend that

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they see the world of the classroom differently; they see the world of teaching and learning through ethnographic eyes. Moreover, qualitative research techniques are being promoted both nationally and internationally as tools for teachers to conduct research in their own classrooms (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Darling-Hammond, 1996; Eisner, 1998; Ulichny & Schoener, 1996).

In this article, I will briefly discuss why teacher beliefs are important to the study of classrooms, why shared thinking promotes teacher development, and why an understanding of culture is important to understanding the classroom. The discussion of these three important dimensions will be followed by a description of ethnographic research techniques and how they can be used in classroom contexts. A description of a conceptual tool that can be used to complement ethnographic research will also be included, i.e., activity theory (Engestrom, 1993). Finally, a brief discussion of what forms of internal and external support might work to promote teachers' ongoing development as teacher-researchers will be included.

Inquiry Strategies: What Do Teachers Want to Know?

Teachers want to know "How do I teach so that children can learn?" This simple question impels many educators to try new activities, share insights with colleagues, and take education classes. Seldom do these activities provide practitioners with methods for studying how their local classroom practices organize learning and developmental processes in both children and themselves. Discussions about teacher effectiveness seldom, if ever, include the fundamental understanding that teachers' beliefs about how children learn guide instructional practices. When teachers have opportunities to examine their own theories about how children learn and grow, they develop skills at recognizing their own assumptions and those of others. In other words, they can think about their own thinking. The process of explicitly identifying assumptions is a prerequisite for critically evaluating extant practices in relation to new curricular activities and information gained from colleagues and university courses. It follows that any inquiry strategy for educational settings needs to foster this metacognition, that is, this thinking about thinking.

Understanding how we think about children's developmental processes, however, is not enough. It is also important to promote shared thinking. Negotiating understandings and taking different perspectives on ongoing instructional problems with others not only produces knowledge but also promotes intellectual development (cf. Chaiklin & Lave, 1993; Hardin & Higgins, 1996; Vygotsky, 1978). Teachers often collaborate with and gain knowledge from their colleagues in direct and indirect ways. These collaborative activities are certainly forms of shared thinking but they are not necessarily systematic, in-depth studies of pedagogical problems. What is needed then is an inquiry method that promotes a more systematic approach to shared thinking and reflection on practice as well as facilitates a close examination of assumptions underlying instructional practices and formal curriculum guides.

Developing skills and strategies to reflect on both teaching and thinking about teaching are important requirements for examining the relationship between teaching and learning. There is, however, one crucial element missing: an understanding of culture. Currently, many psychologists are arguing that children's development can only be understood in relation to culture, that is, how culture is produced through children's active involvement with family, friends, and teachers (Cole, 1996; Miller & Goodnow, 1985; Rogoff, 1990). Culture from this perspective emerges from participation in daily activities. For example, in schools, how children and teachers consistently solve mathematical problems together and alone produces patterned ways of talking, acting, and thinking (Serrano, 1996; Stevenson & Stigler, 1992; Stone, 1998). Capturing practices such as these is equivalent to documenting the processes of learning and development in the cultural context of the classroom. These local practices are not neutral but, rather, are imbued with values and beliefs about how knowledge is produced, who is responsible for knowledge production, and what counts as knowledge. It is not surprising that routine classroom practices have important cognitive and social consequences for children. To understand better how the social organization of learning contexts shapes children's development and how children shape learning contexts, it is necessary to document how culture is produced in classrooms and, in so doing, capture the child-context relationship. The question, then, is what method or methods can be used to capture the dynamic social and cultural organization of learning settings? Anthropologists study culture. Consequently, they have developed methods that are well suited to the study of culture in general and the study of classroom cultures in particular.

Anthropologists, like teachers, spend prolonged periods of time talking, working, and, at times, playing with the people that they are studying. To study people systematically, these social scientists use three simple, modest, yet powerful techniques: watching, asking, and reviewing (Wolcott,1992). When combined, these techniques allow social scientists to document and analyze how adults and children produce culture through their talk, actions, and practices. Teachers can use these common techniques to observe and reflect systematically on their classroom practice in fundamentally new ways. In what follows, I will describe research tools of anthropology and how these tools can be applied to classroom settings.

Watching, Talking, and Writing: Participant Observation Fieldnotes

Anthropologists actively watch people go about their daily activities over long periods of time. These observations are described in vivid and rich detail. That is, anthropologists create fieldnotes filled with "thick" descriptions of moment-to-moment talk, portrayals of how people do things, and accounts of how people interpret what they do (Geertz, 1973). These notes are referred to as *participant* observation fieldnotes because the researcher is not watching from a safe distance but rather participating in the daily activities (Duranti, 1997). Thorough descriptions of routine events in fieldnotes are

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linked to interpretive notes. Interpretive notes document what you as the researcher think. For example, if your fieldnotes include an elaborate description of how children's interruptions are used as opportunity spaces to tell children about turn taking, you might interpret these teacher behaviors as a way to socialize children into local expectations for participation. This interpretation is an inference about what is seen and heard, particularly if you are observing another teacher. Interpretive fieldnotes and descriptive fieldnotes need to be separated from one another. Descriptive notes are the empirical data that allow teacher-researchers to examine events, small groups, episodes, relationships, etc., closely, rigorously, and systematically. On the other hand, interpretive data capture the teacher-researcher's ongoing thinking in the form of reflections, comments, and explanations; this is an analysis of empirical data. Interpretive notes should also include ongoing notes on the researcher's values, beliefs, and experiences; that is, teacher-researchers make note of their own patterns of thinking. Overtime, descriptive and interpretive fieldnotes tend to be modified to reflect more accurate or changing understandings of the learning context and growing theoretical insights (explanations for behaviors). In other words, analyzing and thinking about fieldnotes is an iterative process that promotes continual reexamination of ongoing practices and prior thinking. Put differently, this iterative process is both a data collection technique and a form of metacognition.

How are fieldnotes collected? In practical terms, an accepted convention for logging and separating these notes is called the double-entry method. With this method, a sheet of paper is divided into two columns. One column is used to create the detailed, concrete descriptions of talk and actions; the other column is used to write down hunches, interpretations, and working hypotheses. The double-entry method allows researchers to revise and modify both descriptive data and reflective notes as recall of specific events unfolds and new insights emerge.

Taking fieldnotes in the classroom, a dynamic and demanding context, is not an all or nothing endeavor. There are a range of strategies that teacher-researchers can use to take fieldnotes that accommodate the demands of classroom life. For example, jotting down key words, phrases, ideas, and impressions quickly between activities, or when children are engaged in activities, or during breaks help teacher-researchers remember important characteristics of events or routine happenings (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). There are times when it is possible for teachers to join children in their activities. During these activities, teachers often have opportunities to take more detailed fieldnotes. At other times, teachers may find it possible to collaborate with other teachers to observe each other or create opportunities to work closely with small groups of children. In these cases, fieldnotes may be extensive. If a university is near by, teachers may want to invite a researcher to collaborate on an ethnography—many university ethnographers would welcome the opportunity to work with a classroom teacher.

Given the flurries of activity and ever changing dynamics of classrooms, it is not surprising that taking fieldnotes is not a straight-forward endeavor. It

requires a willingness to experiment and a tolerance for ambiguity. This uncertainty is related to learning how to take fieldnotes, the development of research questions, and the different strategies for collecting data. When teacher-researchers first begin to take notes, they soon discover that decisions about what to write down, what to observe, when to participate, and what to pay attention to become ever present questions. Teacher-researchers also discover that solutions to these problems change as areas of interest, new insights, and research questions evolve. Although teachers, similar to anthropologists, are often interested in particular topics, they do not necessarily have well defined research questions. General questions are ideal for guiding the initial collection of ethnographic data. For example, consider the research question "How do my students learn from working in a cooperative group?" This question does not specify in advance what data you are going to collect. Rather, this question limits your data collection to a particular setting (collaborative groups), particular participants (your students), and requires that you think about what it means to learn (your beliefs). Questions such as this one allow for the emergence of more specific questions to guide further data collection. The point is that questions that drive ethnographic research tend to evolve and become more focused over time. As a consequence of becoming familiar with the data set, researchers begin to identify what data are not captured in fieldnotes or other kinds of data that are needed. It is not surprising that as teacher-researchers develop their research skills, they oftentimes decide to experiment with different data collection strategies, such as video cameras, audio recordings, or graphs/sketches to help better answer their emerging questions and/or to capture talk or actions more accurately. Regardless of which data collection technique is used, however, it is important to find out what children think.

Interviewing: Asking Children Questions

Anthropologists ask people about what they are doing or how they think about what they are doing. These questions are in reality forms of interviews (cf. Seidman, 1991; Spradley, 1979). Asking folks or, in the case of classrooms, children questions about their interpretations about what is going on is a powerful tool for gaining insights into how children are making meaning out of events. The meaning that children make of their experiences affects their behaviors, that is, how they participate and what they do. Moreover, how children make meaning out of events such as writing a story, doing arithmetic problems, or playing in the classroom, may not have the same meaning that a teacher attributes to these activities. An understanding of children's perspectives allows teacher-researchers to tease apart how children's behaviors are related to their understandings of the local context (cf. Denzin, 1977; Mishler, 1979; Waksler, 1986). The world of children, from this view, takes on central importance to understand learning in classrooms.

Of course, in the case of young children, figuring out what they mean by their explanations and their accounts of events is a challenge. Children in

preschool and early elementary grades are not always able to verbalize their thinking accurately. Nonetheless, if we want to examine the reciprocal relationship between teaching and learning, it is crucial to understand how children interpret and make sense out of the world. Fine and Stanstrom (1988) argue that the best approach to studying young children is to take on the role of the child, even if this may not be entirely possible. According to this perspective, teacher-researchers would temporarily let go of the teacher role to participate in activities with children. For example, a teacher-researcher might join children in a game and adopt the behaviors of a child, at least to some degree. Just as one child might ask another a question, so too a teacher-researcher would pose questions during this play activity. For this reason, it is a good idea to think of interviews with children in learning settings as "friendly conversations" rather than formal interviews (Spradley, 1979, p. 59). These conversations can be filled with questions that arise from ongoing activity. Questions arising from the context of meaningful activity are often perceived as more "legitimate" than "teacher" questions. Further, there is growing evidence that when children respond to questions in the context of meaningful activity, their performance is significantly improved (cf. Nunes, 1995; Sullivan & Winner, 1991). In addition to changing the nature of children's responses, more egalitarian arrangements in an ongoing activity can create the circumstances in which both the child and the adult feel more at ease in generating "legitimate" questions. The significant point here is that questions children ask can potentially reveal as much about their understandings as the responses they give.

It is not always necessary, however, to take on the role of the child during an activity. Vivian Paley (1984; 1990; 1992), a teacher and researcher, has studied children using participant observation fieldnotes for many years. She writes wonderful stories of very young children that have changed our understandings of children's social, emotional, and cognitive development. Her work is filled with vivid descriptions of children doing what children do: play, work, fight, collaborate, and talk. These stories, while enjoyable and easy to read, have shaped theoretical understandings of how children make sense out of their world. The point is that rich, detailed, and well-crafted descriptions of children can capture how children perceive situations, how children shape their own learning processes and those of others, and how teaching practices affect children's development. Consequently, it may not be necessary to explicitly shift roles for the teacher-researcher. Nonetheless, when talking or playing with young children, researchers should consider children's perspective of the classroom and children's perspective of their role in the classroom.

Regardless of the strategies that are used to capture children's understandings, it is extremely important to turn fieldnotes, jottings and memories, into detailed written accounts of what happened and what was important. Experiences that seem alive and fresh in our minds fade quickly. After a short period of time, memories for one event can become confused and disordered with other memories. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) contend that "The

goal is to get as much down on paper in as much detail and as quickly as possible, holding off any evaluation and editing until later" (p. 47). Translating our experiences and notes into a written record requires a time commitment, that is, finding a concentrated period of time. When collecting data, it is a good idea to choose a day or two during the week when there will be time for transcribing fieldnotes in the afternoon or evening with few interruptions. The fieldnotes that teacher-researchers produced are extremely important because they become the rich data that will be used for analysis and reflection.

Reviewing: Reflecting and Analyzing as a Collaborative Process

After teacher-researchers start to collect fieldnotes, the question arises, what do I do with all of these data? How a qualitative researcher examines the fieldnotes or other data is, as mentioned earlier, an iterative process. This means that a teacher-researcher would read through his or her notes repeatedly to look for particular incidents, episodes, or happenings. Once similar examples of categories are identified, they can be connected together to tell a story about some aspect of classroom life. Research stories concatenate discrete events into a coherent, clear, believable story that is understandable to others (Emerson et al., 1995). These research stories must stand up to the test of verisimilitude or the quality of appearing to be true or real (Bruner, 1991). How teacher-researchers build their stories of classroom life, that is, develop a coherent and cohesive analysis from a mass of written fieldnotes is done through three analytical steps, i.e., reading, coding, and memoing. Before I explain each of these steps of turning fieldnotes into a research story, however, it is important to talk about the notion of collaborative research.

The work of reflecting on classroom data is at once more enjoyable and more "trustworthy" when it is part of a collaborative process (Glesne, 1999, p. 32). Multiple perspectives on the same events or episodes help make interpretations more reliable when consensus is achieved (Hardin & Higgins, 1996; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Also, an understanding of classroom life is not an either/or situation. For example, consider a teacher watching herself or himself read a book to children and asking questions. The teacher who is reading the story sees this event as an opportunity to promote children's understanding of a story through comprehension questions. A collaborative teacher-researcher might suggest that the teacher was also promoting children's development of perspective taking since all students were expected to relate their ideas to other students in the class. A discussion between the observer and the teacher could potentially lead to a better understanding of what is happening in a literacy lesson. Of course this example is simplified to make a point. Nonetheless, it does illustrate that reflecting on classroom data is best considered as a shared process of discovery. Teachers do not always see the complexity or the consequences of their actions. On the other hand, researchers may not have a completely accurate interpretation of a situation. But as teacher-researchers working together, we can build better understandings of classroom practices

through collective reflection. Collective thinking fosters helpful negotiations about ambiguous events, compelling discussions about specific children, episodes, or activities, and critical evaluations of curriculum and pedagogy. These joint efforts at understanding instructional practice can also gain theoretical and practical insights from perspectives that come from outside of the local school.

Inviting or participating in a project with a university researcher may benefit the analysis of classroom data—and many university faculty are eager to collaborate with educators. Collaborating with a researcher who has different experiences and different kinds of expertise contributes to the rigor and soundness of data collection and data analysis. A related outcome, but not inconsequential, is the development of a vibrant intellectual learning community. These communities are sources of support and inspiration. Further, it is involvement in learning communities that produces the conditions for the development of dispositions in both individual teachers and groups of teachers to take an active role in shaping instructional practices and curriculum content in school settings (Bourdieu, 1977; Stone, 1999; Wenger, 1998).

Steps to Analysis of Fieldnotes

How does analysis proceed with fieldnotes? What are the specific steps? As pointed out earlier, analysis of fieldnotes begins the minute you start to collect data. The reflection column in the double entry method is the location where a teacher-researcher begins to write down hunches, ideas, comments, and musings. These reflection notes shape a researcher's first judgements about the fieldnote data. These initial perceptions also change when a researcher goes back to read over the entire set of notes. The strategy used to structure rereadings is called coding. Coding is a way to take apart observational data in the form of sentences, paragraphs, dialogues, vignettes of particular activities or episodes, and characterizations of participants (Emerson et al., 1990). To code ethnographic data, a teacher-researcher carefully reads through fieldnotes line by line. Strauss and Corbin (1990), Duranti (1997) and other ethnographers suggest that researchers ask themselves questions as they read, for example, What is this? What does this represent? What is going on here? How do members talk about, characterize, and understand what is going on here? Each of these questions helps the researcher characterize each event and identify all of the ideas, questions, themes, and insights in the fieldnotes. This initial process is called open coding (Emerson, et al, 1990). It is an exhaustive process since the researcher is looking for all possible ideas. This first pass at coding is, in reality, a form of discovery. The process of going through fieldnote data and coding is a form of data reduction, that is, the process of taking large amounts of textual data and reducing it into smaller numbers of concepts/categories.

How teacher-researchers first interpret (code/construe) an event or activity often evolves with opportunities to step back and to reflect on the data. This critical analysis of situations promotes changes in understandings. All reflections and emergent epiphanies about fieldnotes need to be noted

in *reflective memos*. Reflective memos are a written record of a teacher-researcher's analysis of his or her codes and the linking of these analytical codes into larger conceptual understandings (categories).

Teacher-researchers' growing understandings of fieldnotes fostered in the first experiences with coding lead to the next phase, *focused coding* (Emerson et al., 1990). Researchers, following the same procedures described earlier for coding and memoing, use focused coding to go through notes once again, but in this second pass there is an effort made to concentrate on a limited number of recurrent ideas or themes that have been identified as being interesting or provocative. Collections of interesting events then can be compared, contrasted, and probed for similarities and differences (Strauss & Corbin, 1997). As an example, a teacher-researcher may decide to code (identify) all conflicts between young children as they jointly work on different mathematical problems. Next, each of the conflicts are placed into groups of those child-child conflicts that lead to more expert understandings and those that do not. Each of these identified groups can be examined to characterize and delineate the salient aspects of each group. The conflicts that promote better mathematical understandings are then juxtaposed with those that do not. When teacher-researchers compare and contrast these examples of peer conflict, they begin to determine if different mathematical problems or different ways of grouping children help foster more productive learning. In effect, this analytic process of comparing and contrasting events allows patterns to emerge that better reflect classroom life and also promote more elaborate and complex understandings of specific learning events. The coded fieldnotes represent the final analytical product. Of course, if teacher-researchers are interested in sharing their findings, it is a good idea to consider presenting at conferences or writing an article for appropriate journals that are interested in teachers who study their own classrooms (e.g., Networks; Educational Research Network).

The analytic procedures described in this article draw extensively from "grounded theory" methods developed by sociologists (e.g., Charmaz, 1988; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Corbin & Strauss, 1990). This approach maintains that the analytical categories researchers use (codes) need to stay "grounded" in empirical data. In other words, a researcher allows analytical categories to arise from the data through the processes of coding and writing reflective memos. For teacher-researchers, this often makes good sense. The point of examining classrooms—from teachers' perspectives—is to have a situated understanding of local practices. For this reason, grounded theory is very appealing to educators. Although this approach to research suggests that teacher-researchers begin the enterprise of examining classrooms without preconceived analytical categories, it is sometimes helpful to use theoretical categories or concepts from existing research. For example, a teacher who is interested in children's motivation might utilize the concept of "intrinsic motivation" to identify when children are participating in an activity for its own sake (Lepper, 1988). The use of this construct does not fully determine what a qualitative researcher

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will find. Rather, the construct is used as a practical tool to identify types of behavior in the data. Whether teachers derive coding categories from the data, borrow concepts from prior research, or use a combination, they still need to have an understanding of cultural settings and their relation to learning and developmental processes.

Conceptual Tools for Examining Classroom Life as a Cultural Context

It is very easy for novice and experienced researchers to conceive of classroom learning activities as a series of discrete events. For example, a teacher-researcher might examine how children accomplish literacy assignments in small collaborative groups without considering the larger classroom context and how this context influences moment-to-moment interactions. It is also very easy to examine how individual children learn without taking into account the social interactional processes that promote learning. Emergent understanding about classrooms as cultural contexts (Miller & Goodnow, 1995) and the role of social processes in learning and development (Higgins, 1992; Ochs, 1988; Vygotsky, 1978) point to the need for conceptual tools to help researchers, novice and otherwise, think about the interrelationship between larger classroom (community level of analysis), small groups (interpersonal processes), and individuals (intrapersonal processes) (Rogoff, 1995; 1997). Such conceptual tools would not determine what a teacher-researcher might find in any specific classroom data set but would simply afford a way to see how relations among children, teachers, and the social and cultural history of the classroom are interconnected to ongoing events. When classrooms can be envisioned as "microsystems" of mutually interacting dimensions, the analysis of discrete events can be conceptualized as an interaction between children and their environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In this article, I offer Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and activity theory (Leont'ev, 1981) as conceptual tools to facilitate the analysis of classrooms as microsystems.

To take into account the crucial relationship between classroom practices in which children participate and the concepts they appropriate, Vygotsky (1978) argues that learning first occurs in a social space[1] between people (interpsychological) and later is transformed and internalized to an individual space (intrapsychological). Interpsychological processes are social because they are socially influenced (mediated). Put simply, cognitive skills and strategies are structured and promoted through participation in routine instructional practices. The assumption that learning is first a social process and later an individual accomplishment (development) suggests that teacher-researchers need to examine closely the nature of interactions used to produce learning events.

[1] In this research, the construct of space is used to describe the socially situated space in which understanding of an event is distributed among participants and emerges through discursive processes.

Activity Theory (AT), an emerging cross-disciplinary framework, is a conceptual tool that can be used to think about classrooms as cultural milieux (Engestrom, 1999; Leont'ev, 1981). AT describes how situated actions of individuals are connected to collective activity. See Figure 1.

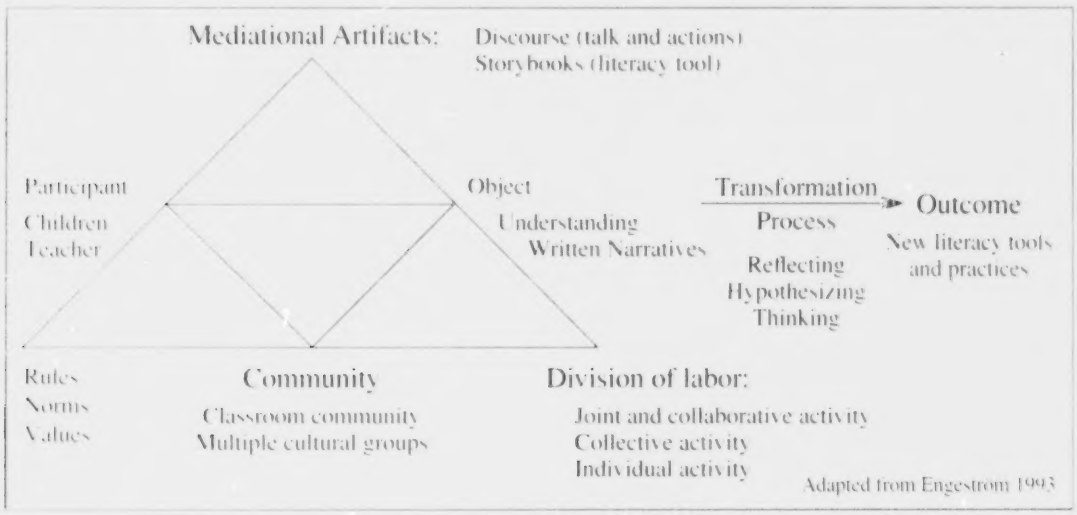

Figure 1. Activity Theoretic View: The Structure of Social Practices

This diagram illustrates the relationship of collective storybook reading to the use of discourse (how actions are accomplished through language), to the rules, norms, and values of a classroom community, to the division of labor of how a storybook gets read, and to the processes of transforming this activity into a desired outcome. This diagram suggests that when a teacher reads a picture book to children and a child responds to a question, it is unproductive to think of the teacher or any one child as acting alone. For example, a child's talk, reasoning, and reflection are inextricably related to interactions with the teacher, to other peers, to the pictures and words of the storybook, to past/present expectations about how to read books together, and to the importance of this activity. Similarly, when children answer questions about stories, their talk, reasoning, and reflection activities are related to who does what during interactions with the teacher (*division of labor/responsibilities*); oral, written, or diagramed representations (*discourse/artifacts/tools*); expectations about how to participate (*norms*) and why certain forms of literature are important (*values*). This vignette is one way that activity theorists describe the interrelatedness of different dimensions of cultural practices.

It is important to note that all cultural practices have goals (objects) related to the local community's social

Kuutti (1996) explicates how over the past twenty years, activity theory has become an interdisciplinary approach used for an analysis of cognition in context.

and cultural history. For example, in a reading lesson the goal may be to create conceptual understandings of the correspondence between written words and sounds. To transform this goal into meaningful events, individuals use tools/artifacts (books, pencils), language, and representations (words/pictures) in a "recurrent...sequence of activities" (Scribner & Cole, 1981, p. 233). This sequence of activities is a practice. It is shaped by a community's history in the form of norms (e.g., expectations about how to ask a question) and values (e.g., beliefs about why it is important for students to share their understandings) (Miller & Goodnow, 1995). AT is one conceptualization of a cultural practice that provides a way to keep each of the salient, dynamic, and interrelated aspects of practices in focus simultaneously. It is possible to identify and code for a range of cognitive and social outcomes in context because AT allows for a simultaneous conceptualizing of the individual and the social context (Stone, 1996).

Support: Finding novel ways to promote change in local cultures

Support for teacher growth and change is of primary importance in educational settings. Without social, emotional, and intellectual support there is little benefit to acquiring strategies and tools for changing practices. Why? The work of teachers is time consuming and demanding. It is difficult to use new strategies or conceptual tools when faced with the daily demands of classroom life. The working conditions of teachers, however, is not the only constraint to instructional change. Schools, teachers' working environments, also have a long social and cultural history with norms and values that also constrain what teachers do, what teachers believe, what teachers think. In other words, the culture of schools works against a fundamental transformation of teachers into teacher-researchers. Change itself can also be an emotionally demanding task—for adults and children. The point is that emotional as well as intellectual support is needed for teachers to take a central role in educational change. Given the constraints on teacher development, it is not surprising that support for productive growth requires both internal and external support.

External Support

As I mentioned earlier, the culture of education does not, in general, promote teacher-based inquiry. One effective way to reshape the history of practices in education is to seek out external support from local universities where many ethnographers are interested in collaborating with educators. Such collaborations bring benefits to all participants. For university researchers, the chance to share ideas and work closely with educators is very appealing because such collaborations can result in educational studies that truly expand our understanding of schools. When published research studies include the perspective of teachers and students, these studies represent more valid portraits. For teacher-researchers, university-school collaborations may be an effective way to draw on the knowledge and skills of more experienced researchers. Novice researchers often develop inquiry strategies much faster with the added benefit of insights

gained from those who have had prior experience. University collaborators also bring ideas about innovative instructional and curricular approaches that might be of interest. Since the work of teachers often constrains their opportunities to attend conferences and/or identify and collect current research findings, easy access to new information is an advantage. In addition, an experienced researcher brings a wealth of knowledge about newer technologies that may make the collection of data and data analysis more efficient. It is always nice to have a tool that makes life just a little easier. Elementary school-university collaborations are clearly beneficial for all participants.

How elementary school teachers negotiate collaborative efforts can vary. In some cases, teachers may ask to be apprenticed into all aspects of the research process. In these cases, teacher-researchers would develop research questions, help design the study, collect and analyze data, and write up written reports. Many teachers, however, prefer to be apprenticed into different dimensions of the research process. For example, a university researcher might collect the data set and the teacher-researcher would be apprenticed into the different analytical techniques. In other instances, a teacher-researcher may want to work on the written report and/or participate in conference presentations. Although there is no one way to organize collaborative efforts, it is imperative that teachers have a voice in the research endeavor and that they have access to new skills and strategies. It is only when teachers have a greater voice in educational studies that the historic treatment of teachers as merely knowledge consumers can be replaced with the notion of teachers as knowledge producers—a more accurate and beneficial description (cf. Bruner, 1996; Sarason, 1990; Stone, 1999). In addition to learning about current research and researcher strategies, teacher-researchers may also want to consider how collaborations with universities can potentially garner the support of school and district administrators. In this way, external support can lead directly to internal support.

Internal Support

Internal support can help teachers find novel solutions to never ending problems: resources (e.g., time, money, technology), experimentation, and innovation. To change practices, teachers need time to collect information, time to reflect on practices, and time to negotiate the meanings of their reflections with colleagues. Finding time for these activities is possible when local administrators place a value on teacher-based inquiry. When this happens, administrators can work with teachers to rearrange schedules, provide unique administrative support (covering classes for 30 minutes to an hour), reframe the use of meeting times, etc., to find creative ways for teachers to collaborate with peers and outside researchers. Teacher-research often results in active experimentation with innovative instructional practices or curriculum. These innovations can be in direct conflict with district policies and/or result in what could be considered unsuccessful efforts. School administrators can help promote the acceptance of experimentations both inside and outside the local school. In either case, local school administrators are well positioned to find ways to help teacher-

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researchers continue with their efforts to improve instruction by promoting a culture of inquiry.

Conclusion

The idea that teachers can inquire into their own practices to produce knowledge about education is a growing phenomena. In this article, I offered ethnographic research as one inquiry tool for teachers to use as a means to reflect on their practice. This approach to inquiry can assist teachers in carefully and closely examining their interactions with students and students interactions with students. These interactions are the production points of knowledge in classrooms. There is little doubt that we need to understand these interactions to improve education (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999). Consequently, the potential to improve schools through teacher-research is enormous. The potential to include teacher voices in these improvements is nothing less than extraordinary given our history of leaving teachers' views out of research. The development of inquiry skills in educational settings is not without problems.

In California, teachers are facing ongoing problems that constrain their active engagement in classroom inquiry. The pervasive acceptance of scripted curriculums, for example, the Distar Language Program, assumes that teachers are merely technicians who deliver predetermined curriculum. Such approaches to teaching and curriculum have been widely rejected by many scholars, including teacher-researchers, because they do not include the voice of teachers in reform efforts (Beyer & Apple, 1988; Bruner, 1996). Scripted approaches to teaching and curriculum fail to take into account the crucial role that teacher beliefs play in education and the importance of adapting curriculum to the local needs of diverse student populations. Apple and Teitelbaum (1986) argue that such approaches "deskill" teachers and render them inept at making complex decisions about curriculum and instruction. Jerome Bruner (1996) warns us that we create the conditions for "alienation, defiance, and practical incompetence" when we do not nurture thoughtful action (p. 43). In agreement with the perspectives of Apple, Teitelbaum, and Bruner, this article argues that teachers need to develop skills and strategies for systematically reflecting on instructional practices, curriculum, and children's learning and developmental processes. When teachers take on the role of a researcher who is inquiring into what works and what does not, they have opportunities to develop the knowledge and insights needed to create more productive teaching and learning contexts. The research stories that teachers produce can provide a unique perspective on schools—one that has been missing in educational research.

Teachers and administrators who are interested in further discussing qualitative research strategies or in finding ways to support teacher research, please feel free to contact the author. Email address: lstone@csus.edu.

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Rules are Made to be Golden: A Qualitative Study of American and Japanese Children's Morals

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The purpose of this study was to examine the moral development of Japanese and American first-and second grade children. The data came from written essays of children from both nations. The data analysis revealed that when making moral decisions, the children of both nations were clearly influenced by the universal concepts of responsibility, social rules, hidden curriculum, empathy, and perspective taking. However, the children of both nations were also influenced by their own cultures. Specifically, Japanese children arrived at moral decisions through the cultural filters of sunao (cooperation), hansei (reflection), apology, and feelings, whereas American children arrived at these same decisions through such cultural filters as honesty, feelings, and a sense of right and wrong.

Mac had been born prematurely, and this had resulted in his having a number of disabilities that included a lack of sweat glands, a severe skin condition, sparse head hair, and only four teeth by the age of six. Mac stood in shocked silence, his eyes liquid and his mouth agape in response to James shouting to his friend, "Yukky! Mac is here. He stinks!" Teddy responded in kind, "Let's get out of here; we don't want to play with him." "Stop talking to him like that!" scolded Katey as she rushed to Mac's side. "We don't say things like that to anyone; you are hurting his feelings. We all are friends. Just because Mac looks different from you, you don't do that!" Katey looked at Mac smiling sweetly, "Mac, I want to play with you. You want to play house with me?" Although Katey was only 6 years old too, she had lived half of her life outside of the U.S. and had the experience of playing with children from many different cultures.

Meanwhile, in the land of the rising sun, a conversation in Japanese begins with, "Friends, listen to me. One of your friends, Koji, will be out of school for a couple of weeks because he is getting his leg operated on tomorrow." A hush fell over the classroom for a moment, and then everyone looked in Koji's direction and applauded as a gesture of wishing him good fortune. "But it hurts to be operated..." The words stopped in mid sentence. Another moment of silence as eyes were diverted to a boy on the periphery of the classroom who had spoken in haste."How come you have to say something like that?" an annoyed girl spoke up in defense of the soon-to-be patient. "We just want to cheer him up! Besides, we

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just talked about how we should not do things to others that we don't want others to do to us. That is our class's goal. Don't you remember?" Another round of applause ascended from compassionate classmates.

The two incidents described above are very informative about how children make moral decisions based on their experiences and on information gained at school and at home. From these sources spring the rules that are made to be golden. According to Vygotsky, these intellectual patterns of thinking are products of the activities practiced in the culture in which the child is reared (1978), and cultural value systems shape children's morality. Wainryb (1993) affirms that there are individual differences in moral judgments and that the main source of these differences is of social and cultural context. Moral values are played out by real people in real everyday situations, and children's exposure to moral concerns comes from experiences within their culture through interactions with parents and peers. By age five, children are familiar with their own cultural codes and assumptions in order to make consistent, culturally appropriate moral decisions (Damon, 1988).

Children's moral development in relation to cultural differences has been compared by some researchers (e.g., Edwards, 1987; Hamilton, Blumenfeld, Akoh, & Miura, 1989; Wainryb, 1993). In their study, Hamilton et al. (1989) compared Japanese and American fifth graders' reasons for achievement and good conduct in school and found that, in the areas of social procedure and morality, Japanese children tended to internalize these cultural norms more than did their American counterparts. Hamilton et al. concluded that Japanese children seemed to identify with authority figures in relation to their school achievement and social conduct. To illustrate cultural differences in morality, Eisenberg and Fabes (1998) explain that, "Westerners may value prosocial acts that appear to be based on endogenous motivation more than do people from traditional cultures, whereas people from traditional cultures value prosocial actions that reflect responsiveness to other's stated needs and reciprocal obligations" (p. 709).

Parents and teachers in highly industrialized nations, where education is valued, generally value their children's moral development. In Japan many educators and parents consider that "education of hearts" (moral education) is the number one issue in the current society (Oshitani & Naito, 1994). "Japanese common sense, taught along with Japanese history and culture, is most evident in what is called 'moral education.' In its current manifestation, a child studies behavior and relationships within the family and community" (White, 1987, p. 16). Many observers of the Japanese educational system report that one of the main goals of education is to nurture healthy, happy, social, and moral children (e.g., Ito, 1994; Kristof, 1997; Lewis, 1995; Taylor, Lichtman, & Ogawa, 1998; Tobin, Wu, & Davidson, 1989; White, 1987).

Among the goals of Japanese moral education are those which closely relate to the Japanese culture, and White (1987) states that the moral educational goals are almost always regarded as social or interpersonal issues. The Monbusho (the Ministry of Education, Science, and Culture, 1998) provides the following guidelines on how to

teach moral education as a subject in elementary schools: In grades one through six, children need to develop attitudes of respect and love toward their parents and grandparents; in grades one and two, children need to take the initiative in helping out their families and in doing chores at home; in grades three and four, children need to make an effort to create happy home environments; and in grades five and six, children need to seek happiness for their families and to be useful and helpful to their family members. These goals are created according to children's developmental levels.

Though Japan's goals of moral education may be more formalized in regards to specific school guidelines, parents and teachers in America also value their children's moral development. Lickona (1996) acknowledges the role of parents as the child's first moral teachers, but emphasizes the strength of school and home working together "to raise up moral human beings and to elevate the moral life of the nation" (p. 35). As early as 1920, there was a great deal of attention being given to the development of good character education in schools throughout the country (Leming, 1995). In response to what is currently seen as a crisis of character in the youth of the United States (Lickona, 1991, 1996; Lundstrom, 1999), there is now a recurrence of attention and emphasis on character education in America's schools. This current interest has given rise to numerous character education curriculums. Unlike in Japan, where The Monbusho provides guidelines for moral education, Leming (1995) predicts that "hundreds, if not thousands, of different approaches in character education" (p. 7) will exist in American schools, if they do not already. Leming observes that these approaches include published curriculums, as well as school designed programs. The main emphasis of both is on basic core values. The second author of this paper teaches in a school adopting a school-designed curriculum known as "The Bridge to Caring" with the values of respect and responsibility as the pillars supporting the bridge. As with many of the existing curriculums, these and other universal values (including caring, honesty, and the importance of community) are discussed and practiced in real and dramatic situations.

The school contexts of these two nations differ markedly in that Japanese elementary school children are socialized for group-orientation, whereas children in the United States are more likely to be socialized in order to maximize individual differences (Bredekamp, 1987; Ishigaki, 1992; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; The Monbusho, 1998). In previous comparative studies regarding elementary school children's morals, only older children were studied. One study compared older American and Japanese children, fifth graders (Hamilton et al, 1989), and the other examined only Japanese children and adolescents (Munekata & Ninomiya, 1985). Because children's morality develops earlier (Damon, 1988; Piaget, 1932/1997), and to better understand the effects of comparative school contexts, research is needed at the beginning of formal education. To fill this need, we studied children at the beginning of formal education in the United States and Japan, examining the moral development of first and second grade children in both countries. A compara-

tive study of moral development at the beginning of formal education in the two nations would provide information as to how morality is developed in both group-oriented and individual-oriented cultures. Because one goal of Japanese education is the transition of the culture (Taylor et al, 1998), an examination of the Japanese and American children's responses to moral dilemmas could offer a salient contribution to understanding children's development of morals.

Method

Data Collection

The data came from written essays of children from Japan and from the United States. We used the instrument entitled, The Prosocial Attitude Blank (PAB) (Suriani & Wasson, 1994; Wilson & Taylor, 1999). Following is a list of questions to which the children responded: (1) Pretend that you borrowed a ball from a friend in your neighborhood and that you lost the ball. What would you do and why? (2) Pretend that you see another child at school whom you do not know being picked on and being called names. What would you do and why? (3) Pretend that you are in a store in your neighborhood. You find a wallet with money in it. What would you do and why? (4) Pretend that a teacher accuses you of cheating when you did not cheat. What would you do and why? and (5) Pretend that you see your little brother and sister steal candy from a store. What would you do and why?

The PAB was administered to the Japanese children by their teachers. The teachers of the first graders read the items to the students, and the second grade students read all five items with ease and responded to the questions by themselves. According to the Japanese teachers, the students recorded their own responses. In the United States the second author read the items to the students and helped the first graders record their responses.

Participants

The participants of this study were 64 children from the mideastern part of Japan consisting of 17 boys and 16 girls in the first grade and 15 boys and 16 girls in the second grade, as well as 44 children from the southeastern United States consisting of 10 boys and 11 girls in the first grade and 11 boys and 12 girls in the second grade. These children were randomly selected and from lower to upper middle class families and from urban and rural residences.

Data Analysis

Each Japanese response was translated into English by the first author. Two bilingual Japanese educational psychologists then reviewed each response, and they reached consensus on the translation. The data were analyzed according to McCracken's (1988) five stages of qualitative analysis. In the first stage, we read each statement with no concern for its relationship to other aspects of the text. In the second stage, we read each statement repeatedly to become familiar with the transcript. In the third stage, we began to watch for patterns and themes to develop. In the fourth stage, among themes, patterns, as well as similarities and contradictions, we selected relevant materials and discarded the irrelevant ones. Finally, in

the fifth stage, we brought together the themes from each response, unified them under the umbrella of the cultures being studied and then related them to the review of the literature.

Analysis consisted of examination of action and reason response patterns by situations and grade level. Although many students listed several actions, we analyzed only each child's first action(s) and reason(s).

Results

From our analysis of the data, we identified five themes that seemed to be related to the moral development of the children in this study: responsibility, social system morality (Kohlberg, 1984), hidden curriculum, empathy, and perspective taking. We defined responsibility as "taking care of self and others, fulfilling our obligations, contributing to our communities, alleviating suffering, and building a better world" (Lickona, 1991, p. 68). Social system morality is the fourth stage in Kohlberg's theory (1984) of moral development where moral decisions are based on society's rules, law, duty, justice, etc. Hidden curriculum was defined as "the unstated but influential knowledge, attitudes, norms, rules, rituals, values, and beliefs that are transmitted to students through structure, policies, processes, formal content, and the social relationships of school" (Irvine, 1991, p. 5). We defined empathy as "an emotional response stemming from another's emotional state" (Turiel, 1998, p. 875). Perspective taking was defined as "the ability to take the viewpoint of other people, see a situation as they see it, imagine how they might think, react, and feel" (Lickona, 1991, p. 55).

Responsibility

With primary importance placed upon self, an emphasis on responsibility will evoke responses to the given dilemmas reflecting issues of honesty, well-being, and self-importance. Damon (1988) claims that "For the optimal development of moral character, a child needs to experience the responsibilities and rewards of genuine service while still young" (p. 130). As seen in the following data, both Japanese and American children fall along the continuum of responsibility to varying degrees.

In responding to the first dilemma, "What would you do if you lost your friend's ball?" the majority of the responses of the American children indicated a belief in taking personal responsibility for their actions and being honest about what had happened to their neighbor's ball. Of the 21 American first grade students, 20 made simple and to the point responses: "find it," "look for it," "buy another one." American children in the second grade were more explicit. One second grade student remarked, "I would tell the friend and try to replace the ball." Similar to the American children's responses, 32 Japanese children conveyed their sense of responsibility in such statements as these by two first graders and two second graders respectively, "I'd look for it till I find it," "I'd buy one for my friend," "I'd pay for it," and "I'd look for it diligently."

In this particular dilemma, both of the response themes used by American students, responsibility and honesty, evoked related reasons of "why?" and, again, an emphasis on obligation. Fourteen of the 44 American students responded they would take their chosen

action because it was their personal responsibility. The first graders, once again, were to the point, "I lost it" appearing 11 times. The second grade students were again more explicit, "because it was my responsibility." Another second grader commented, "[because it's] not fair if they buy a ball and I lose it." In speaking of honesty as the reason for her action, one second grader said simply, "to be honest." The reaction of yet another second grader was more personal, "because I cannot tell a lie." Damon (1988) states that taking responsibility for one's good as well as one's bad deeds is one of the most effective ways to develop morality and "goes to the heart of moral character" (p. 129). Similar to Damon, Greenberg (1992) explains that taking responsibility is one of the important moral character practices.

Another example of responsibility was seen in the responses of both Japanese and American children when asked about the fourth dilemma concerning the wrongful accusation that he or she cheated. This was the first, and only dilemma, to attack a student's personal honor. In varying degrees of explanation and apparent outrage, the majority of both Japanese and American children agreed that their actions would be to insist that they did not cheat. The tenor of both Japanese and American senses of taking responsibility to clear this problem is conveyed in the following ways: The 39 Japanese responses reflecting this opinion included a first grade girl who said, "I would say 'that's not true!'." Another Japanese first grader explained, "I would say 'I did not!' and I would get mad at the teacher." Likewise, 32 of the 44 American children expressed this same reply, as seen in this first grade boy's response, "I'd tell the truth that I didn't cheat." An American girl remarked, "[I] would say [to the teacher] you got me mixed up with someone else," while another said, "[I] would tell her she was mistaken." When asked to give their reason behind their action, many (39) Japanese children did not give reasons, but 19 of them simply reported that they would insist that they did not cheat because that was the truth. Forty of the 44 American students did state reasons for their actions with the predominate one (19) being the same as the Japanese children: "because I didn't cheat." It is noteworthy that these Japanese and American students' statements seemed to convey a tone of responsibility, self-expression, and self-confidence in that they would insist their innocence, and in that they also expressed feelings of anger and outrage in their responses. In his explanation that anger, outrage, shame, and/or responsibility can influence our moral behaviors to situations, Damon (1988) states, "Often it is the perception of a uniquely moral sentiment like guilt or responsibility that makes us first aware of the moral demands of certain life situations" (p. 13).

Social system morality

The children of both nations seemed to be making moral decisions based on social system morality (Kohlberg, 1984), which includes laws, justice, duty, and social rules. For example, children tend to say it is wrong to steal because it is against the law. This theme of social system morality surfaced when the students were asked what they would do if they found a wallet containing money. In this particular dilemma, the children of both nations expressed concern for getting the wallet

back to the owner. Of the 64 Japanese first and second grade children, 56 responded that they would take the wallet to the police or give it to the store owner so the wallet would be returned to the owner. One Japanese first grader commented, "The wallet belongs to someone so I would take it to the police," while another said, "The person who lost the wallet might be looking for it, so I would give it to the store people, and they could give it back to him." Exemplifying another aspect of the social order, when asked why they would be concerned with the owner, 16 of the Japanese students responded that if they kept the wallet they would become thieves. "If I took it, I would become a thief," said one first grader. Seven Japanese second graders responded that the police could find the right owner, saying, "If I took it to the police, they could find the owner." Concern for getting the wallet back to the owner was reflected in 38 of the 44 American first and second graders' responses to the question, "What would you do?" Though all responses had the same meaning, they ranged from a first graders simple response, "take it to whoever it belongs to," to a second grader's more explicit remarks, "[I] would give the manger [sic] the money and tell him 'I found this money' and would give it to the owner." Another American second grader said, "[I] would take it to the police, and ask, 'do you know whose this is?'" The American students were concerned with their personal honesty as seen in 25 of the 44 related reasons for returning the wallet to the rightful owner. One first grader put it like this, "we know its [sic] not ours and belongs to someone else," and another replied, "so you won't be stealing nobody's money." Second graders' responses included, "I do not want to steal" and "because if I took it, it would be stealing."

Further supporting the theme of social system morality, in responding to the question about a younger sibling stealing candy from a store, the majority of the Japanese children (57) responded that they would take some kind of action to stop their sibling from stealing. One first grade girl said, "I would scold my brother and say, 'Hey, don't steal that; it belongs to the store.'" Another girl expressed her shame by saying, "I would apologize to the store people for my brother and return the candy." Of the 34 Japanese first graders, 21 did not provide their reasons, but 13 claimed that stealing was wrong. One second grader stated that "if it were my sister, I would feel shame." In varying degrees of explanation, eight children showed concern for their siblings. One second grader noted "I'd tell him not to do it and stop him, because my brother doesn't know what he is doing is wrong." Another second grader said, "If I warn them, they won't do it again."

In this same dilemma, American students responded with two predominate themes: 37 students would either take responsibility for the situation and direct the outcome, and 11 students would turn it over to their parents. In either instance, the predominate reasons for taking the chosen action were the apparent premise that stealing is wrong or that without some action on their part, the sibling would be in trouble. Both reasons seemed to be indicating a collective consciousness as seen in the following response by an American first grade boy, "I'd snatch it from them and give it back." A second grader said, "[I]

would tell my brother or sister not to steal and give it back to the store," and another replied, "[I] would tell my mom or dad." American students' reasons for both of these actions were based on the premise that stealing is wrong. Twenty-two of the 44 students gave this response. For example, a second grade student responded, "tell them not to do that and put the candy back [because] they're doing something wrong." A first grade girl gave this reply, "tell my mommy or daddy or brother or sister so my mommy or daddy will teach them not to steal." The other 13 students said their reason would be to keep the sibling out of trouble, "tell them don't steal no more that when they grow up they might steal and go to jail." A first grader appeared somewhat concerned that the situation could have negative results for the entire family, "tell them to put it back...if they keep it they'll get in jail. They'll get the whole family in jail probably." These children's responses appeared to be related to their trust in authority figures and to their hope that seeking adult assistance will solve the problems. Lickona (1991) explains, "Respect for authority comes from understanding that legitimate authority figures are entrusted with the care of others" (pp. 43-44).

Hidden curriculum

Whether they intend it or not, schools do influence children's morality through the hidden curriculum (Damon, 1988; DeVries & Zan, 1994; Dewey, 1933; Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998; Lewis, 1995; Santrock, 1998; Silberman, 1970). In many classrooms social and moral curriculum is not only hidden from the children but it also may not be evident to the teacher. Yet, teachers constantly inform students of social and moral messages when they communicate the rules and behaviors, while also serving as models for appropriate and inappropriate social behaviors.

To illustrate the concept of hidden curriculum, two American children wanted to take the test over to prove they did not cheat, as seen in this second grader's reply, "[I] would tell the teacher that I didn't cheat but I would take the test over because I would be showing her that I didn't cheat." The response of three American second graders included disturbing replies saying, "[I] would go with being accused of cheating," or "[I] would just get in more trouble arguing with the teacher." Another said, "[I] would listen to them and do what they say because she is bigger than me." These replies are reflective of the hidden curriculum often found in American classrooms. These observations are consistent with the findings of DeVries and Zan (1994), which report that in most schools "the sociomoral atmosphere is mainly coercive and requires children to be submissive and conforming" (p. 26). Children see their teachers as authority figures, and teachers feel the responsibility to be the authority figures. The result, intentionally or unintentionally, leads to a situation in which a child learns what is right or wrong, good or bad from the classroom teacher. DeVries and Zan (1994) note that this situation is seen not only in strict authoritarian classrooms but also in caring, child-centered environments as well. The result is the same, "children know where the power lies" (p. 26). The power lies with the teacher.

On the other hand, Japanese hidden curriculum is group solidarity, and

kindergarten and elementary school teachers consciously teach group identity (Singleton, 1989). Lewis (1984) agrees with Singleton's notion regarding Japanese hidden curriculum by stating that many Japanese teachers use cooperation among children in controlling their behavior, and teachers keep a low profile as classroom authorities in order to minimize the impression of their control. Also teachers delegate authority to children to encourage them to manage their own problems without teacher intervention, thus, promoting group solidarity.

However, in contrast to the above-mentioned western researchers' views of Japanese hidden curriculum, some Japanese researchers agree with the observations made by DeVries and Zan (1994) that the teacher holds the power in the classroom. Tamaru and Idogaki (1999) studied Japanese elementary school children's interactions with their peers, parents, and teachers and found that the social status of these people determines how some children interact with them. For example, in an experiment where children were asked what they would do if their teacher wrongly accused them of breaking something, some children would not attempt to correct the teacher; rather, they would be submissive, believing that the teacher would not listen to them.

Empathy

Empathy reflects a manner of action that will address the good of the group and will, thus, demonstrate a caring community. Both apology and sympathy also can be found among children's described reactions and reasons for their actions when an emphasis on empathy is applied.

When asked what they would do if they lost their friend's ball, the Japanese children's responses indicated responsibility and honesty as did their American counterparts. The data showed that out of 44 American students, 43 considered taking personal responsibility for losing the ball as their first choice of action, but only four mentioned an apology. In contrast to the majority of American children, Japanese first and second graders appeared to strongly believe that they would apologize for the loss, which is indicative of empathy. Saying "sorry" to the friend was a prevalent first action choice for many Japanese children. Out of the 64 students, 41 considered that an apology was the best way to handle the first situation. One first grade student remarked, "I apologize to my friend till he forgives me." Another first grader said, "I buy another one and apologize." A second grader stressed his apologetic response by saying, "I look for it very, very hard and if I can't find it, I apologize." To Japanese children admitting mistakes and apologizing for wrongdoing are part of their socialization (Azuma & Kashiwagi, 1987; Lebra, 1976). The Japanese socialize their children to have orderliness, manners, interpersonal harmony, perspective-taking skills, behavioral modesty, etc. To illustrate the importance of manners, Lebra (1976) explains, "Emphasis is consistently placed on expressing thanks for favors and apology for wrongdoing" (p. 148).

In addition to apologizing, five students used the word, *sunao* (openness, cooperativeness) to admit fault. Sunao is often used in Japan when describing one of the most important moral qualities of the child (Lewis,1984;

Shigaki, 1983; Taylor et al., 1998; Ugai, 1988; White, 1987). A sunao child is described as "a good participant in group activities, a good listener to adults, a good replicator of society's norms and standards" (White, 1987, p. 185). In order to promote prosocial behavior, the Japanese Monbusho's guidelines for moral education (1998) repeatedly use the term "sunao" when describing the teaching content for grades one through four. These moral guidelines, which refer to self-related issues for first and second graders, state that one should be sunao, leading a life that is serene and free of dishonesty or deception. Yet another example of sunao in the guidelines can be found in the self-related issues for third and fourth graders where it is recommended that one think carefully and admit one's mistakes *sunaoni* (honestly, willingly, cooperatively). To demonstrate how deeply sunao was embedded in Japanese moral education, the following comment demonstrated the reaction of a second grader to his loss of a friend's ball: "I'd be sunao and tell the truth." It is interesting to point out that although Greenberg (1992) does not use the term, sunao, she identifies one of the ingredients of ethical and moral practices as similar to the Japanese concept of sunao by stating, "desire and ability to plan, work, and make decisions cooperatively, sometimes reaching consensus and sometimes going along with decisions made by a majority" (p. 11).

In relating the children's reasons for apologizing for the loss, the responses of 23 Japanese first and second grade children seemed to be associated with such emotions as empathy. To illustrate, one second grade girl said, "Because if I didn't tell my friend about it, I feel sorry for her," while another second grader stated, "I feel sorry for my friend." Another second grader articulated, "I don't want to do the wrong thing to my friend." Yet another second grader explained," Because I feel bad for her." A second grade girl talked about her reasons for apologizing as being related to empathy and friendship by saying, "If I didn't tell my friend and apologize, I would feel sorry for my friend." The present observations of empathy in Japanese children are further supported by others who studied Japanese human development (e.g., Azuma & Kashiwagi, 1987; Lebra, 1976) who stated that empathy is one of the most important components of Japanese human development.

In giving empathy-oriented reasons, eight of the Japanese children expressed a "blend of empathy and pragmatism" (Damon, 1988, p. 38) in justifications of their actions. Damon explains this blend of empathy and pragmatism as children's understanding of reciprocal interactions. For example, children share toys because if they share, others will share toys with them. Damon describes this blend by saying, "This is not quite the Golden Rule yet, but it is certainly a form of understanding that is precursor to it" (p. 38). To illustrate, a second grade girl noted, "Since she is my good friend, I wouldn't want to lose our friendship." Another second grade girl explained, "Because if I don't tell my friend about it, she won't like me." Two concerned second graders said, "Because if I don't tell my friend about it, I would lose my friend,' and "Because I don't want my friend to cry and to get mad at me."

Although only four of the 44 American students mentioned apologiz-

ing for their actions when asked about this same dilemma, their responses indicated taking personal responsibility for the lost ball and telling the truth about the situation, both of which indicated the American students' willingness (just as their Japanese counterparts) to admit self-fault. Although the term sunao has many implications, the self-related issues stated in the Monbusho's guidelines in which a student admits one's mistakes sunaoni (honestly, willingly, and cooperatively) applied to American students, as well, in this study. As compared to the 23 Japanese first and second graders who expressed empathetic feelings, only 6 American first and second graders expressed any of these feelings. One first grade girl said, "Be kind to them, ask them their name because we don't know them, it hurts their feelings," while another kind girl said, "They can hurt their feelings." A concerned second grader commented, "(I) would say, 'stop' and play with them so they would not have their feelings hurt." In explaining some important issues of ethical and moral education, Greenberg (1992) states that empathy toward others, as well as warm concern for others and making an effort to help them are all part of moral development.

Perspective Taking

Perspective-taking ability sets the base for children's moral development (Damon, 1988). Both American and Japanese children expressed varying degrees of perspective-taking ability when responding to the five dilemmas.

When asked what they would do if they saw another child at school being picked on and being called names, the children of both nations responded very similarly, stating that they would tell the perpetrator to stop picking on the child. Of the 64 Japanese children, 40 responded that this would be their first response. One first grade girl said, "I would stop them," whereas another first grader responded, "I would work up my courage and say, 'Hey, don't do that!'" The second most prevalent Japanese response, as indicated by 27 children, was to ask teachers to help. Exhibiting perspective-taking ability, five children stated that if the same was done to them, they would not like it. One Japanese first grader, for example, took the perspective of the target child by saying, "I would have to stop them because it would not be nice if someone did it to me." A second grader said, "I would stop him because it would make me happy if someone helped me out." In addition to the concept of taking another's perspective, another first grader went further in explaining her actions and reasons by using a Japanese concept of self-discipline, *hansei* (reflection), "I would tell my teacher and then make the bullies hansei (reflect) on their faults, because I wouldn't want these people to do the same thing to me." Here is a microcosmic example of how the concept of hansei, which permeates the society at large, is a form of self-discipline that is encouraged in school and throughout life (Lewis, 1995; White, 1987). "A child is encouraged to practice such examination and to seek out his own sources of weakness, self-discovery being much better than having others point out flaws in character" (White, 1987, p. 32). Children are encouraged early on to hansei and to encourage each other to do likewise with the ultimate goal of self-improvement.

Of the 44 American children in the first and second grade responding to this same dilemma, 25 indicated their response was telling the perpetrator to stop picking on the child. Again, these American first graders were brief and to the point, with responses such as, "tell them not to do that" and "stop, don't pick on other [child]." Another's reply was, "[I] would say, 'Hey stop picking on his [sic], he's a new kid." Others indicated they would tell their teacher, as with this first grade boy, " I tell the teacher." Another expressed the need to tell any authority figure, "tell a grownup or a teacher." One first grader, however, commented he would go straight to the top authority at the school, "[I would] go to the principals (sic) office and tell."

Sixteen of the 44 American students were concerned with the child's feelings in much the same way as the Japanese children. Of those 16, five expressed hurt feelings of the target child, four felt it was the wrong thing to do, and seven thought it was mean to pick on someone. Only one American student stated a response that was reflective of the perspective of the target child: "Because that person does not like to be picked on and I don't either."

From a Japanese first grader and an American second grader came insightful statements that demonstrated their abilities of mutual perspective taking (Selman, 1980) when dealing with the found wallet. To illustrate this concept, one Japanese first grade girl expressed great concern for the child who would be accused of stealing by saying: "I would tell the store people that I found the wallet, because it would be sad if a person who had not stolen the wallet was falsely arrested just because the wallet was reported missing to the police." This response from the first grade girl appeared to indicate she is making inferences based on her internalized thoughts about the remote possibility that some hypothetical child might be accused of the theft if she failed to take the appropriate actions. An American example of mutual perspective taking came from a second grade boy, " I would tell the bullies 'stop doing that, it's not nice' and if they stopped I would walk away with the other kid I don't know and play with him/her." This boy also seemed to make inferences on how he would make the target child feel better by helping and planning to play after this event. This is the third stage in Selman's development of perspective taking (1980) in which one child, interacting with another, can have a simultaneous, mutual view of the self and of the other. In this stage, the child understands that both the self and the other can view each other mutually and simultaneously as subjects. The child can step outside of the two-person relationship and look at the interaction from a third-person perspective. By advancing to the next level, the child can even step into the role of a hypothetical third person to view the interaction of the two. According to Selman, it is usually children ages 10 to 12 who are capable of this third stage, yet we found that these two younger children in both nations had this ability. Damon (1988) describes this stage of perspective taking as an advanced moral concept.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the moral development of Japanese and American children. We identified the five themes that appear to

be related to the moral decisions of these children in both nations: responsibility, social system morality, hidden curriculum, empathy, and perspective taking. We will discuss these themes accordingly.

When both Japanese and American children talked about responsibility, they expressed self-oriented responses in relation to dealing with the fourth dilemma concerning the wrongful accusation of cheating. The majority of both samples clearly stated that they would insist that they did not cheat and that they did not seek any assistance from adults. There was a remarkable similarity in the responses of both Japanese and American children that taking personal responsibility for their actions was their priority.

Both American and Japanese educators agree that to foster children's responsibility is to give them an opportunity to be responsible for their actions (e.g., Hendry, 1986; Lewis, 1995; Lickona, 1991). Japanese teachers especially try to promote a sense of responsibility in children by extensively involving them in classroom management (Hendry, 1986; Lewis, 1984; 1995; Kristof, 1997). To illustrate: first, Japanese teachers keep a low profile as classroom authorities in order to minimize the impression of their control, and second, Japanese teachers delegate authority to children in order to encourage them to manage their own problems without teacher intervention. Lewis (1995) further explained that the heart of Japanese classroom management is to foster children's positive attachment to the school, and in order to develop such an attachment in children, teachers guide them to "identify with the school's values and to behave in ways consistent with the goals of kindness, cooperation, and responsibility that are so prominent in Japanese school life" (p.124) by involving peers in discipline. Lewis's observations of Japanese teachers' classroom discipline were supported by Hendry (1986), who found that "Rather than applying rules of constraint imposed unilaterally from above, teachers allow the children to impose rules upon themselves, rules which in Piaget's view are concerned with mutual agreement and cooperation" (p. 57). In American classrooms, the concept of a "just community" described by Kohlberg and Lickona (1987) support this same idea in which children are the heart of classroom democracy. Students come together to construct classroom rules and discuss first-hand violations; the teacher's role becomes one of mentor and facilitator. Having been involved in the making of the rules, the students feel a sense of ownership for them. Kohlberg and Lickona summarize the value of these experiences: "They are engaged in a behavioral process of acting on their social environment in ways that open the door to the eventual development of more sophisticated social-moral reasoning" (p. 163).

In giving social rules-oriented responses, both American and Japanese children appeared to be showing respect for authority figures, such as police, parents and adults when dealing with the problems of their siblings stealing candy from a store and of finding a wallet with money in it. There was a remarkable similarity among both the American and Japanese children in expressing their concern that they would take some kind of action to solve these problems. Most of them voiced their opinions based on the notion

described by Kohlberg (1984) that children understand that stealing is wrong because it is against the law. In addition, many children chose to seek adults' assistance. Some American children mentioned the consequences of stealing by saying stealing would lead to jail, while the Japanese children made no mention of going to jail. The findings of this study indicating that Japanese children seemed to have respect for authority figures are supported by other studies which found that Japanese children strongly internalize parental, group, and institutional values (Lewis, 1986; Nakane, 1972; Vogel, 1963; 1979; White, 1987). Likewise, the results of one recent American survey (Cohen, 2000) indicating that young children respect adults and seek their guidance when making certain decisions is confirmed by the 75% of the 165 elementary children between the ages of five and ten who said that if they saw a friend doing something wrong, they would inform a teacher or a parent.

Children's morality also appeared to be influenced by hidden curriculum in this study, and some American children clearly asserted the influence of hidden curriculum in their replies, some of which were disturbing. The statement, "I would go with being accused of cheating because I would just get in more trouble arguing with the teacher," reflects the social atmosphere of the classroom as described by Irvine (1991), in which the hidden curriculum includes unstated yet important values, beliefs, attitudes, and norms that are conveyed to students through school environments. DeVries and Zan (1994) further comment that "the hidden curriculum consists of the norms and values embedded in the social structure of schools, especially those related to discipline" (p. 3). In accord with DeVries and Zan, Greenberg (1998) notes the dark side of American schools, stating "It's sad if school people can't help children with feelings of anxiety, anger, and inferiority. But it's worse than sad if teachers exacerbate or give children those feelings. And this happens every day" (p. 77).

To exemplify Japanese hidden curriculum, Singleton (1989) explains that group solidarity and commitment to it are parts of the real (or hidden) curriculum of most educational processes. Therefore, elementary and kindergarten teachers consciously promote group identity in children, since school is the environment where children develop peer solidarity and group norms (Hendry, 1986; Kotloff, 1993; Lewis, 1995; Singleton, 1989). Although these western views of Japanese hidden curriculum of group solidarity can be openly found as the main goal of elementary school education set by the Monbusho (1998), Japanese views (Tamaru & Idogaki, 1999) are also consistent with DeVries and Zan's (1994) notion that children interact differently with their teachers depending on their teaching styles, behavior, rules, values, and attitudes. From both western and eastern perspectives, there is a similarity in both nations' hidden curriculums that children still know who is the authority in the classroom, although many teachers try to combine an authoritative attitude with affection and child-centered activities.

Both the Japanese and American children seemed to give empathic reasons and actions when dealing with some of the dilemmas. Moral development involves moral feelings, such as empathy (Damon, 1988; Lickona,

1991); moral feelings begin at an early age with parental guidance and are promoted by parental approval. Moreover, Eisenberg and Fabes (1998) comment about the importance of empathy for the promotion of prosocial behavior, stating that "sympathy and sometimes empathy (depending on their operationalization) are positively related to prosocial behavior" (p. 735).

When comparing Japanese and American students' moral judgment to the five described dilemmas, the recurring difference in the two groups' responses was that a greater number of Japanese children referred to moral feelings as a justification for their actions. Japanese parents appeal to empathy when interacting with their children (Lebra, 1979), and in many areas of their lives depend on empathic and harmonious human relationships (Rohlen, 1989; Shimahara & Sakai, 1992). In Lebra's words, "The child is thus trained in the vicarious sharing of another person's pleasure and displeasure so that he regards the possibility of hurting another person's feelings as frightening" (1979, p. 153). Most American children talked about justice and personal responsibility as justification for their actions.

Another difference in expressing empathy was demonstrated by how a majority of Japanese children mentioned apologizing for their loss of the ball, while only four American children mentioned apologies in their responses. Apologies come natural for Japanese children as apologizing is part of their socialization (Azuma & Kashiwagi, 1987; Lebra, 1976). Because they consider themselves to be fully human when in the context of others (Lebra, 1976; Sato, 1994), most Japanese consider manners such as saying "thank you" and "sorry" important in order to keep harmonious human relationships. Lebra (1976) further explains the importance of empathy in Japan stating, "generalized benevolence is a moral virtue stressed in Japanese culture under such names as *shinsetsu* (kindness), *nasake* or *jihi* (compassion), *awaremi* (pity), and *omoiyari* (empathy)" (pp. 101-102).

Another contrast between the responses in the samples regarding empathy was the concept of sunao. In the first dilemma both Japanese and American students felt responsibility for their actions, and the concept of sunao, as a willingness to be honest, could be applied to both groups. However, the essence of sunao as seen as an autonomous and group-related response was present in the Japanese responses and absent in the responses of the American students who reacted to the loss with a unchanging respect for right or wrong.

In giving perspective-taking responses, both Japanese and American children reacted in much the same way to the problem in which a child who was a stranger being picked on, saying that they would try to stop the situation. Both groups were concerned with the feelings of the victimized child. Both American and Japanese children also showed the ability of mutual perspective taking in their responses. However, the difference in the responses of the two groups was emphasized by the fact that the Japanese children stated reasons of perspective taking for their actions more often than their American counterparts by a ratio of five to one. This same concept was seen in Japanese children's responses to the dilemma of observing their siblings taking candy from a store. In both dilem-

mas the American children, again, were more straightforward and based their decisions on a concept of right or wrong, while the Japanese students based their decisions on awareness of others' perspectives. Likewise, one child mentioned the Japanese term "hansei," a concept that stresses self-reflection and the practice of examining one's own character, and is encouraged throughout life. This child reflected upon herself relative to the other child's feelings as well as her own should someone begin picking on her.

Conclusions

When making moral decisions, the children of both nations in this study were clearly influenced by the universal concepts of responsibility, social rules, hidden curriculum, empathy, and perspective taking. However, the children of both samples were also influenced by their own cultures. Specifically, Japanese children arrived at moral decisions through the cultural filters of sunao, hansei, apology, and feelings, whereas American children arrived at these same decisions through such cultural filters as honesty, feelings, and a sense of right and wrong. Research literature reveals that moral reasoning and prosocial values differ remarkably among cultures that vary in terms of modernity, of religion, and of cultural values (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998). Likewise, Damon (1988) and Wainryb (1993) claim that moral development is influenced to a large degree by cultural context and that individual differences in moral judgment will, in part, be due to cultural variances. Eisenberg and Fabes (1998) further explain, "In some cultures, helpfulness and social responsibility are emphasized more than individual rights, gain, and achievement, and this difference in values is reflected in thinking about prosocial behavior" (1998, p. 709). In addition, as Turiel (1998) points out, "It is Western cultures that tend to conceptualize morality in an abstract way, with standards deemed applicable across situations and persons" (p. 875). On the contrary, as Lebra (1976) states, "Japanese morality stresses recognition of man's frailty and the necessity of compassion and tolerance" (p. 11). Markus and Kitayama (1991) explain these cultural differences between the two nations in the following way:

> Many Asian cultures have distinct conceptions of individuality that insist on the fundamental relatedness of individuals to each other. The emphasis is on attending to others, fitting in, and harmonious interdependence with them. American culture neither assumes nor values such an overt connectedness among individuals. In contrast, individuals seek to maintain their independence from others by attending to the self and by discovering and expressing their unique inner attributes (p. 224).

In spite of these cultural differences, both nations value moral education, and although the American implementation of moral education may not be the same as that of the Japanese, educators in the U.S. have been promoting the importance of morality through character education (Lickona, 1996; Lundstrom, 1999). Just as Japanese official guidelines for moral education of elementary schools advocate the importance of moral

feelings (The Monbusho, 1998), American character education also promotes good judgment and moral feelings such as empathy. Perhaps the words of Professor Toshio Tatsumi, a renowned Japanese educational psychologist, best explains how children learn moral values:

> Teaching children to say "sorry" when they have done something wrong is not enough for them to learn moral values. When they have done such, they need to feel the regret in their hearts, just as when having done something good, they feel joy. Teachers need not only to teach children good conduct but also to give them ample opportunities to feel. Moral actions need not only knowledge and behavior, but also feelings, and we must let children experience the pleasure of having values that warm the heart (Toshio Tatsumi, Personal communication, November 19th, 1999).

Recommendations

Based on our literature review, we recommend the following practices to promote the five themes that in this study appeared to be related to children's development of morality. Teachers need to:

1. Model appropriate moral behavior. "Children learn and imitate what they see and experience (Osofsky, 1995, p. 2). Teachers need to treat children with love and respect, to set a good prosocial model, and to guide them to appropriate behavior (Lickona, 1991). As the social learning theory approach informs us of the power of modeling, we can exhibit responsible, empathic behavior for children.

2. Create a community atmosphere in the classroom (DeVries & Zan, 1994; Lickona, 1991; Honig & Wittmer, 1996; McClung, 1998; Wittmer & Honig, 1994) by providing a democratic classroom environment where children can share making decisions, taking responsibility, and having a sense of belonging. Japanese early childhood educators try to build an extraordinary sense of community in the classroom and in school by using cooperative learning (Kristof, 1997; Lewis, 1995). Lewis further explains that Japanese teachers often described the small group, the class, or a school as a family so that children could learn from one another and care for the welfare of others (1995).

3. Practice classroom management that promotes children's responsibility, social system morality, empathy, and perspective-taking skills by using "a respectful engagement" (Damon, 1988, p. 118). In respectful engagement, both adults and children are productively involved and engaged in moral education. In Damon's words: "The child needs adult guidance, but in order for the guidance to register, the child must be productively engaged; and in order for such engagement to occur, the child's own initiatives and reactions must be respected" (p. 119).

4. Teach values, ethics, and morality through the curriculum (DeVries & Zan, 1994; Honig & Wittmer, 1996; Lickona, 1991). DeVries and Zan (1994) promote this idea by creating "the sociomoral atmosphere as hidden curriculum" (p. 25). Lickona suggests "using academic subjects as a vehicle for examining ethical issues" (p. 68). One way to do this is to have a classroom policy of open expression. Damon (1988) suggests that "Children should

be encouraged to recognize their own moral feelings and urged to discuss them with the adults in their lives" (p.126). By having open expressions of feelings in the classroom, teachers can support and encourage children's moral feelings, thoughts, ideas, and reactions; can help children identify them; and can guide children in controlling these moral feelings (Damon, 1988). For ideas regarding the sociomoral atmosphere in the classroom, see the book by DeVries and Zan entitled *Moral Classrooms, Moral Children* (1994). Honig and Wettmer (1996) also describe some suggestions for implementing a prosocial program that fosters morality.

5. Arrange model mentors to visit children in the classroom (Damon, 1988; Honig & Wittmer, 1996). Damon suggests that teachers bring into the classroom such people who have shown exemplary moral behavior in the community. Such moral mentoring can "enhance moral awareness by offering firsthand illustrations of the kinds of moral issues to which dedicated individuals respond" (pp. 152-153). Honig and Wettmer also suggest that teachers can ask children to nominate such people in their families who help others in need and invite them to the classroom to participate in discussions.

6. Emphasize cooperation in the classroom in order to promote children's morality (DeVries & Zan, 1994; Damon, 1988; DeVries & Kohlberg, 1987; Kamii, 1982; Lewis, 1995; Honig & Wettmer, 1996; Lickona, 1991; Wittmer & Honig, 1994). The setup of classroom spaces and materials can facilitate cooperative learning. When age appropriate materials are available as well as adequate space for groups to work and to play together, cooperation will be more prevalent (Honig & Wittmer, 1996). Providing children mutual goals that they can work together to accomplish is also important.

7. Teach and encourage moral reflection (DeVries & Zan, 1995; Greenberg, 1992; Lewis, 1995; Lickona, 1991). After observing many elementary schools in Japan, Lewis (1995) describes how the concept of hansei (reflection) works in schools. She noted that on a daily basis Japanese children discuss their aspirations and reflect (hansei) on their progress toward their classroom goals such as kindness, cooperation, responsibility, persistence, friendship, etc, and that teachers encourage children to reflect on their daily behavior and performance through class discussions. As Lewis (1995) notes: "Children frequently reflect on their behavior and discuss how it relates to such values as kindness and responsibility. Such reflection may build an enduring habit of self-evaluation" (p. 123). Likewise, Lickona (1991) suggests the importance of moral reflection through reading, writing, discussion, debate, problem solving, decision-making exercises, etc.

8. Teach problem-solving skills and conflict resolution. Lickona (1991) suggests that teaching children such skills would promote their moral development as well as prosocial behavior in fair, nonviolent ways. Johnson and Johnson (1995) also promote the importance of such skills that reduce violence through conflict resolution. The role of conflict and its resolution was believed by Piaget "to be the most influential factor in the acquisition of new knowledge" (DeVries & Zan, 1994, p. 81).

9. Provide ample opportunities for children to practice moral action (Lickona, 1996) by taking ample time to teach children acceptable behavior (Greenberg, 1992). Teach children respect for the rights of others, self-control, orderly conduct, sharing, caring, cooperation, and responsibility for the group good. "Teach by example, by stating your expectations, and by taking time out of whatever you're doing when an incident arises; this is the core curriculum of a democratic program emphasizing ethical, moral behavior" (Greenberg, 1992 p. 13).

10. Provide children with opportunities to make restitution for wrongdoing (Waite-Stupiansky, 1997). When children act inappropriately or impulsively, teachers need to give them opportunities to make amends. "For example, if a child hurts another child, she can help with comforting the child or getting a bandage or a glass of water" (Waite-Stupiansky, 1997, p. 64). This opportunity for restitution helps the child develop social skills as well as a sense of justice.

Limitations of the Study

The first limitation of this study is that there are no naturalistic observations of children's behavior. Had we observed children's behavior in their natural settings, we could have validated their perceptions of moral reality as expressed by their actions. Another limitation is that we did not schedule follow-up interviews to help the children in both samples who were unable to respond to the "why" questions. Follow-up interviews might have been helpful in getting responses from these children. However, it is also important to note that, as Goodman (1957) and Powdermaker (1956) point out, asking children to state some of their responses in writing is functionally equivalent to data collected by interviews. From this perspective, then, this study shows what children's society and culture look like through their eyes and how they think about morals with respect to their perceptions of society and culture. Drawing further implications from this study for comparing the development of morals in different countries must await replication of the findings on larger samples and on the extension of samples to populations of children in different countries.

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Reading, Writing, Talking, Thinking, and Caring in the Kindergarten Classroom

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New state kindergarten standards in California list reading content that used to be more commonly taught in first grade. This article examines some of the thinking behind this change and argues that beginning reading can be incorporated into the kindergarten curriculum but not at the expense of two other key components—socialization and language development. Ways in which these three goals can be strengthened and combined are described. Developing a caring community with an emphasis on intrinsic motivation and collaborative learning positively affects students' sense of worth and is associated with higher academic achievement. Academic language development through challenging read alouds and through "talking and writing to learn" builds the comprehension base that is so critical in the upper grades. Finally, kindergarten students can begin to master beginning reading strategies when instruction is carefully scaffolded to meet their varying developmental levels and when "hybrid" text is used as a transition from predictable to decodable text.

So little time, so much to do. Teachers have probably thought this so often that its audible expression has been reduced to a simple sigh. Now they are being asked to do even more—teachers are being asked to teach their students the basic reading and writing skills that have traditionally been taught during the first half of first grade. It is tempting to think that the people making the decisions do not have a clue about the reality teachers face, which to some extent is correct. However, there are sound reasons to fit more formal reading and writing instruction into the kindergarten curriculum, and equally strong reasons to maintain the traditional focus on socialization, language development, and listening comprehension. While it may seem impossible to think about adding the teaching of beginning reading and writing to the already full traditional kindergarten curriculum, we propose that it is both possible and desirable.

This paper describes an approach to the language arts curriculum that combines (a) an explicit focus on building caring classroom communities, (b) an indirect constructivist approach to fostering language development and comprehension, and (c) a direct instruction approach to teaching the skills and concepts needed for beginning reading. Our thinking represents a collaboration among Marilyn Watson and Cindy Litman, both at the Developmental Studies Center, John Shefelbine at California State University Sacramento, and, for the reading part, kindergarten teachers in two school districts who have been using the approach we describe for several years. We propose that imbedding language instruction in virtually everything teachers do and taking the time, during the first half of the school year, to build a caring community and to teach children how to productively engage in

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many informal literacy learning activities will make it possible for the kindergarten teacher, during the second half of the year, to directly teach in small groups the decoding skills needed for beginning reading.

What we have discovered in our work is that creating a caring classroom community, a traditional goal of kindergarten, not only supports children's social, emotional and ethical development, but it also supports their development as readers, writers, and thinkers. Likewise, a carefully chosen reading and language arts curriculum supports not only children's literacy development, but it also helps create a caring classroom community.

In this paper we will briefly underscore the importance of beginning the year with a focus on community building and describe a structured approach to teaching beginning reading and writing that is developmentally appropriate. We will also describe how this approach depends on and contributes to the establishment of a caring classroom community. This approach allows teachers to accomplish more within the confines of the kindergarten day.

Beginning with Community

In today's high stakes testing, high academic accountability world, it is tempting to think that teachers cannot afford to take the time to build classroom community. We argue that they cannot afford *not* to do so. While building a caring community takes time and teachers are not "being held accountable" for how much their students like school or how well they have learned to regulate their emotions, resolve conflicts, or empathize with others, these things are vital to children's development as people and as readers (Greenberg, 1998). For example, children who succeed in making friends in kindergarten not only liked school better, they performed better academically (Ladd, 1990). At-risk children who have a close relationship with their teacher perform better academically and, conversely, those who have a conflictual relationship show a decline in performance (Pianta, 1999). Students in schools that have a strong sense of community and a strong academic program out-perform on standardized tests students in schools that have only one or the other (Lee, Smith, Perry, & Smylie, 1999). Even to achieve optimal academic learning, it is essential that teachers begin the year as they always have, with a strong focus on building classroom community.

Combining Community Building with the Literacy Curriculum

The dilemma is how to fit an expanded literacy curriculum into an already crowded day. One answer to this dilemma is to combine the focus on community building with the literacy curriculum, thereby serving multiple goals with the same activities. Through book selection and the focus of its suggested activities, "Reading For Real," the program we have developed, can help. In this program, many of the books and activities explore issues of friendship, interpersonal conflict, and personal responsibility. For example, reading, talking about, and role playing scenes from such books as *Ruby the Copycat* (Rathmann, 1991), *Matthew and Tilly* (Jones, 1995), and *No Good in Art* (Cohen, 1996) can help students

be more aware of the values and behaviors that go into a caring community while they are building their language, listening comprehension, and concepts of print.

Collaborative Learning Can Foster Both Community and Literacy

Additionally, if teachers build and scaffold collaborative processes into their literacy lessons, they will not only foster a deeper understanding of the ideas in the text and enhance oral language, but they will also help students learn the skills of effective peer relationships. For example, teachers can establish learning partners each day and ask students to sit with their learning partners to hear and discuss the books that have been read aloud. When teachers then ask a question related to the reading, they ask the students to discuss the question first with their partner, thereby providing everyone with the chance to talk before some are given the opportunity to share their thinking with the whole class. This simple procedure provides students with more opportunities to talk, and it also reduces the self-control demands of group discussion sessions, thereby helping students stay more focused on the content. Moreover, as a special bonus, it helps the students like one another better, since they are serving the positive function of being listeners for one another. Finally, the fact that everyone has an opportunity to share his or her thinking lessens a major source of competition in the classroom—the desire to have one's voice heard above the others.

To use partnerships in this way and in a myriad of other ways, it is necessary to teach children how to engage one another respectfully. The teacher will also need to provide lots of opportunities for students to get to know one another as people as well as partners. For example, having children create class books about themselves, interview one another about a way they helped a classmate, create group collages of their favorite things that begin with various letters of the alphabet are all ways to build community and literacy simultaneously. These and many other ideas are outlined in two books produced by Developmental Studies Center. One, *Blueprints For a Collaborative Classroom* (DSC, 1997), focuses on ways to help children learn the skills and values of respectful collaboration, and the other, *Among Friends: Classrooms Where Caring and Learning Prevail* (Dalton & Watson, 1997), focuses on building community. We turn now to the part of our program about developing children's language, listening comprehension, and concepts of print.

Building Language and Comprehension

Kindergartners benefit from reading/language arts instruction that builds academic language and comprehension with direct instruction in decoding. Our program was designed to create this combination of experiences. The program emphasizes a handful of instructional strategies that get to the heart of what is critical for kindergartners to know and be able to do. These strategies include:

- talking to learn;
- reading (and being read to) to learn;
- writing to learn (about language and print); and

- learning word recognition strategies (phonemic awareness, phonics, and sight words).

In this section, we will focus on language and comprehension instruction in kindergarten. We will begin by reexamining the role of oral language in literacy development. We will then view academic language through a kindergarten lens and, finally, offer strategies for tweaking traditional kindergarten activities to increase their effectiveness for building language and comprehension.

Some lucky children have over 1,000 hours of literacy experience prior to kindergarten; others arrive with as few as five (Adams, 1990). Children with limited literacy experience are at a serious disadvantage, not only in learning concepts of print, but also in developing the academic language that is the foundation of literacy. While all young children need opportunities to develop vocabulary and background knowledge, a purposeful, efficient approach to building academic language is absolutely essential for kindergartners with limited prior literacy experiences.

The Role of Language in Literacy Development

Although vocabulary is the strongest predictor of reading comprehension (Anderson & Freebody, 1981), research indicates that language plays little role in early reading achievement (Juel, 1994). Given this, it is tempting to conclude that the traditional kindergarten emphasis on oral language development is misinformed. Indeed, it has become popular to describe the developmental course of reading as one that begins with "learning to read" in the primary grades, then shifts to the stage of "reading to learn" in the intermediate grades. The new state standards reflect this point of view. Why then do we argue for an even greater emphasis on developing language in kindergarten?

While it is true that oral language does not predict reading ability in first grade, oral language in kindergarten is highly correlated with reading comprehension in the upper grades. One longitudinal study found a strong relationship between oral language in kindergarten and children's reading ability *eight years later* (Loban, 1964), and the correlation increased incrementally with time—from .36 in grade 4, to .52 in grade 8.

A more recent longitudinal study of reading comprehension corroborates those findings. Juel (1994) found that reading comprehension in the first grade was predicted almost exclusively by decoding. By second grade, however, deficiencies in vocabulary, world knowledge, and critical thinking became limiting factors, and this effect increased with each grade. While poor readers were most vulnerable, even initially good readers were at risk when they moved beyond basal readers. "[W]e noted that they had increasing difficulty, inasmuch as these good readers lacked the world knowledge and vocabulary necessary to understand these more challenging materials" (p. 126). Thus, early oral language development plays a critical role in literacy development—although the relationship does not emerge until later.

There are two likely explanations for the negligible relationship between language and reading in the early stages of reading: 1) reading test performance in the beginning stages of

reading primarily reflects differences in decoding ability, and 2) easy reading materials place little demand on language and background knowledge.

The academic language and critical thinking experience that students need to comprehend more difficult text does not develop through exposure to beginning reading text. For example, children have little problem understanding what is happening with the ant in this beginning reader (Shefelbine, 1996):

> Can you see the man?
> Yes. The man is on the car.
> Can you see the rat?
> Yes. The rat is on the car.
> Can you see the ant?
> Yes. The ant is on the car.
> I see the man and the rat.
> I can see the ant.

But look at what happens to bug watching just a few years later!

> One type of insect that Charles Henry Turner kept in his insectary was the ant lion. Have you ever noticed funnel-shaped pits in the sand or in loose, dry soil? These pits are made by ant lion larvae. Even though they are small, ant lion pits are large enough that ants and other tiny creatures tumble into them. Once inside, they try to clamber out, but many an unfortunate creature gets snatched by the ant lion larva waiting in ambush at the bottom. The ant lion sucks the body fluids of its **prey** through hollow jaws, before discarding its empty shell (Ross, 1997, p. 37, original bold).

Not only do readers encounter an increasing number of challenging words (e.g., **insectary**, **larvae**, **clamber**), but many familiar words are used in new and potentially confusing ways (e.g., **loose**, **shell**). Developing facility with challenging texts requires explicit attention—whether at school, home, or both.

Academic Language through a Kindergarten Lens

Figure 1. Field notes.

Academic language, or the language of books, develops quite independently of decoding ability. To emphasize this point, consider these field notes "written" by a kindergartner observing a flock of birds. Notice how well the writing captures the field note genre. The scribble writing and use of carefully rendered illustrations interspersed with text exactly mimics the style and purpose of scientific field notes.

Even without print, this simple piece of kindergarten "writing" reflects a deep understanding of both the purpose and form of written language—an understanding that comes only from immersion in written text. Thus the

term academic language incorporates knowledge of text structure and genre, as well as vocabulary.

Of course, vocabulary is a major component of academic language. Here is how the kindergarten author of the bird field notes translated her notes:

> *Jay birds land on wires very quickly. I see lands of trees ahead of me when I look.*

Notice the figurative language. A metaphor like *lands of trees* rarely appears in everyday speech, but is a regular feature of academic language. The vocabulary, though relatively simple, has a precision that is characteristic of written text: *Jay* birds *land* on wires *very quickly*. This precision is a necessary feature of academic language because writing is by its very nature decontextualized, or abstract. It depends on language alone to convey the writer's ideas, without the benefit of contextual cues (e.g., pointing, intonation) that anchor meaning in face to face conversations.

The writing anticipates the limitations of the reader. Note that the author avoids expressions like "over there" or even, "*Those* birds land on wires very quickly." She recognizes that the person reading the message, possibly at a much later date, will not have the benefit of the context, and that anything she wants to say must be said with language alone.

Finally, notice that the text adheres to an expository language structure. The author writes "Jay birds," generalizing to the whole category of jay birds, rather than "The jay bird" or "A little bird landed in the wires..." as in narrative storytelling.

Thus, children can begin developing a sophisticated awareness of and facility with academic language even before they gain an understanding of the alphabetic nature of reading and writing.

Strategies For Building Language In The Classroom

Academic language is developed through immersion in books and instructionally focused conversations about books and children's experiences. This means that kindergarten teachers who use rich vocabulary in their conversations with children and who read aloud books that challenge students' current language abilities are providing a critical component of reading instruction. These two activities form the core of our approach to teaching language and comprehension in kindergarten.

Fortunately, kindergarten teachers have long recognized the value of reading aloud and talking with children about books, so an increased emphasis on developing academic language does not require a major shift in instruction. Rather, we will suggest ways that teachers can tweak language and comprehension activities they already use to make them more effective.

Talking to Learn

Talking like an author. One way teachers can expose children to rich vocabulary is by modeling their own language on the way children's authors write. At first, it helps to plan this in the same way as any other part of the curriculum. To get started, the teacher chooses an everyday routine e.g., lining up for recess, and transform it into a language development activity by replacing ordinary ways of saying things with more literary language. Instead of

addressing students as *boys* and *girls*, the teacher uses *males* and *females*, *gentlemen* (or gents) and *ladies*, *lads* and *lassies*, *guys* and *gals*, *lords* and *damsels*, *masters* and *mistresses*, *hermanos* y *hermanas*, etc. Instead of lining up *quickly*, the teachers asks students to line up *swiftly*, *rapidly*, *fleetly*, *speedily*, *promptly*, *instantaneously*, *tout de suite*, *sharply*, *lickety-split*, *posthaste*, *expeditiously*, or *pronto*. Instead of *walking* down the halls, students *stroll*, *promenade*, *saunter*, *amble*, *meander*, *ambulate*, *scuttle*, *cruise*, etc. The teacher need not limit the utterance to a single word. Rather, the teacher should be on the look-out for interesting phrases and ways of saying things—and encourage students to do the same. Imagination, a sense of humor, and a good thesaurus are all that are needed to succeed.

Decontextualized talk. Adults can boost children's language development simply by talking with them. But not all talk is the same. More important than the shear amount of talk is the nature of the discourse.

The most effective kind of talk is the kind that sometimes happens around the dinner table—high interest conversations about people, places, things and events that are not immediately present. The news, a playground incident, a surprising bit of information, an upcoming event, a novel idea, a problem or concern, beliefs about why things are the way they are or opinions about how they should be, reminiscences about a shared experience, or sharing unique experiences or knowledge about an interesting topic are all grist for classroom discussion. Such decontexualized talk requires children to use language itself—rather than context—to understand and convey their message.

Indeed, it is largely through decontextualized talk that children develop the kind of oral language and thinking skills that are the foundation for literacy. Furthermore, it is not enough for children to listen passively. Students must participate actively in decontextualized talk to reap the benefits. (This does not mean that children must be talking constantly, of course. Learning also happens when students actively reflect on what others say.)

Admittedly, it is a challenge to engage a whole class of kindergartners—all with different interests, temperaments, and experiences—in one conversation. In addition to promoting whole class discussions, the teacher should use every available opportunity, however brief, to talk with individuals and small groups—during center time, snack time, while walking students to recess, etc. One way is to engage students by asking *open-ended questions* that require an *elaborated* response: "Who would like to tell us about something they saw (or something that surprised/ delighted/interested or intrigued them) in the school garden?...Why was it interesting to you?...Can you describe it to us?" instead of, "Who saw the new flower in the garden?...Wasn't it gorgeous?...Can you tell us what color it was?"

The way the teacher answers students can also foster language and thinking (Whitehurst, et al., 1988). One way is to respond to what children are *trying* to say. Another way is to expand on a child's remark by providing concepts or language the child is lacking and by using corrective modeling and other kinds of feedback to bridge the gap between what the child said and what he or she *might have* said: "Those

'wiggly things' on the ants' head are *antennae*. What do you suppose the purpose of antennae might be?" Or, "That *was* quite a *coincidence* that you and Marti both wore the same *outfit*!"

Kid-kid talk. Students share their teacher with many other children. While the teacher can create an environment that fosters language development, children cannot and should not depend on the teacher for all their language experience. In addition to teacher-guided talk, children need opportunities to develop and practice language skills with peers. Few activities support child-child talk better than dramatic play. If planned thoughtfully to evoke language, dramatic play is an important academic component of a kindergarten classroom.

Partner reading is another activity that encourages children to talk to one another. Furthermore, children are more likely to use academic language when interacting around books. Wordless books, which require students to supply the text themselves, are an especially rich context for evoking academic language in kindergarten.

Reading Aloud

Even when teachers make a conscious effort to use novel and varied language in their conversations with children, it is difficult for them to match the rich and far-ranging vocabulary of written language. Indeed, children's picture books contain more uncommon words than the everyday conversations of college graduates (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998)! Furthermore, written language is necessarily decontextualized—an author conveys his or her message to the reader using language alone, without the assistance of gestures, expressions, and other cues that support face-to-face discourse. Of course, few kindergartners can read on their own. Therefore, building kindergartners' vocabulary and background knowledge depends to a large extent on the teacher reading aloud.

Read every day. We rarely learn a new word or concept after hearing it just once. Instead, vocabulary and background knowledge build over time as a result of encountering words and concepts over and over again in different contexts. Because the chances of encountering uncommon words increase with more reading, it is imperative to read aloud daily—for at least 30 minutes, using this 30 minutes to expose students to a wide range of vocabulary, ideas, and information.

Read a variety of texts. Since there is no scope and sequence for acquiring vocabulary and background knowledge, the corpus of read-aloud materials appropriate for kindergarten is very large. The teacher may choose any book that engages students and stretches their vocabulary and world knowledge, including children's classics such as *Winnie-the-Pooh* by A. A. Milne or *Stuart Little* by E.B. White; magazine articles from *Cricket* or *Spider*; as well as contemporary children's literature (candidates for Children's Choice, American Library Association, or Caldecott awards, for example) and expository text. Teachers should aim high and adjust downward if necessary.

Predictable Text and Language Development

Children's literature is a rich source of information about many things, including such "kindergarten"

concepts as color, shape, directionality, and spatial relations. Indeed, literature can help students develop a more elaborated understanding of these concepts than materials designed with this goal in mind.

The book *Rosie's Walk* (Hutchins, 1968), used by many teachers to teach the concepts *across, around, over, past, through, under*, and *back*, mentions each of these words once in a single context. In contrast, the *first two pages* of *Winnie-the-Pooh* (Milne, 1992) contain multiple references to prepositions and relational words—*downstairs* (3), *back* (1), *behind* (1), *bottom* (1), *in front of* (1), *upon* (1), *in* (2), *under* (3), and *over* (1)—in varied contexts. They end with the following delightful passage:

> Once upon a time, a very long time ago now, about last Friday, Winnie-the-Pooh lived in a forest all by himself under the name of Sanders.
>
> *("What does 'under the name' mean?" asked Christopher Robin.*
>
> *"It means he had the name over the door in gold letters, and lived under it."*
>
> *"Winnie-the-Pooh wasn't quite sure," said Christopher Robin...*
> (Milne, 1992, pp. 3-4)

While *Rosie's Walk* does a wonderful job of introducing the concepts of across, around, over, etc., developing a complex understanding of these concepts depends on repeated exposure through texts like *Winnie-the-Pooh*. One would never choose *Winnie-the-Pooh* specifically to teach spatial relationships—but developing conceptual knowledge is one of the many fringe benefits of reading challenging text.

Indeed, books with predictable text may be a poor choice for developing language. A study of the long-term effects of reading aloud on low-income children's vocabulary and comprehension found that a shared book approach to reading, characterized by children chiming a repeated phrase or familiar pattern and recall of recently read text, was associated with lower vocabulary development. This led the authors of this study to speculate that "a steady diet of books with predictable text may not be optimal" (Dickinson & Smith, 1994, p. 119).

The Role of Informational Text

While children's literature is a wonderful source of incidental knowledge, teachers should make a conscious effort to alternate narrative and expository texts. Expository text has a language of its own, and the abrupt introduction of content area reading in the intermediate grades is a major contributor to reading difficulties among children with little prior experience with informational text (Chall & Jacobs, 1983). However, regular exposure to informational books in kindergarten may alleviate the problem in part. A recent study found that when kindergarten teachers read aloud informational books on a daily basis, students begin incorporating expository language and thinking strategies, such as comparing and contrasting, spontaneously in their own speech (Duke and Kays, 1998). An added benefit of reading aloud informational texts is that the same activity that develops students' academic language and listening comprehension fosters subject matter knowledge in social studies, science, art, etc.

Increasing the Efficiency of Read-Alouds

While reading aloud is a major contributor to academic language, it is also not an especially efficient way to build vocabulary (Nagy, 1988). Indeed, the chances of a child learning a new word from a single reading is about 5%. Challenging books will naturally contain words kindergartners do not know—and will not learn from a single exposure. The following strategies, which add little time to the read-aloud experience, substantially boost the chances of students learning new vocabulary from read-alouds:

Read in ways that heighten students' attention to language and comprehension. Read expressively—vary pitch, rate, and volume appropriately to provide a context for unfamiliar language. As the book is previewed in preparation for the lesson, the teacher needs to plan for how to read so as to engage students and support comprehension and language learning.

Read the book more than once. Research shows that children benefit from hearing books more than once (Elley, 1989). If a book is challenging and the content worthwhile, the teacher should consider reading it twice, or even three or four times.

1. Read the sentence containing the unfamiliar word.
2. Define the word in a brief aside.
3. Reread the sentence, replacing the unfamiliar word with the definition.

Example.

Read: "*Boris had forgotten for a moment that he had a passenger on his back and had sounded*" (from *Amos and Boris* by William Steig, 1971, unpaginated)

Define the word: *The word sound means to dive quickly downward.*

Reread, replacing the unfamiliar word with the definition: *Boris had forgotten for a moment that he had a passenger on his back and had dived quickly downward.*

Generate a teacher vocabulary list. After identifying two or three interesting words from the book, the teacher uses them when talking with the students. As a general rule, the words chosen should have broad application across contexts, such as *atmosphere, intention, soothing, antennae,* or *coincidence,* rather than words with very specific and limited application, such as *diploducus, helium, troglodyte,* or *photosynthesis.* The teacher uses the words (and variations of them) in many different ways in the context of normal conversation and challenges students to use the new words in *their* conversations and writing as well.

Example.

> "I think the bees *suspect* something!"
>
> "What sort of thing?"
>
> "I don't know. But something tells me that they're suspicious!"
>
> —from *Winnie-the-Pooh*
> by A.A.Milne, 1992, p. 15

The word *suspect* is an example of academic language—rare in everyday speech, but frequently found in books; it is a word that is worth knowing. After encountering the suspect in *Winnie-the-Pooh*, the teacher uses it (and its derivatives) in conversations with the students:

- Mary, when did you begin to *suspect* that the answer was going to be different this time?
- The person who left us this gorgeous

bouquet didn't leave a note, but Mr. James is my number one *suspect* because I was telling him about our flower study and he told me that he is an avid gardener and promised to bring us a surprise!

- Bo, I get *suspicious* when you finish your work so soon. Let's look at it together.
- What are your *suspicions* about what is going to happen to the seeds that are growing in our file cabinet?

Comprehension strategies instruction. In addition to creating a language-rich environment, read-alouds should be used in kindergarten to explicitly teach comprehension strategies. "Think-alouds" can be used to model for children how readers monitor and check their comprehension by retelling the story, tackle difficult passages by rereading and reading ahead, and make inferences by bringing in prior knowledge. The teacher can discuss and model comprehension strategies to help students form mental representations of language, e.g., "Imagine you are right there in the book (or one of the characters) and that the events in the story are happening to you." Or, "Try to create a picture in your mind of what you hear...Who wants to tell us about what they pictured in their mind as they listened to....?" While children who have been read to a lot may have picked up some of these strategies through interactions with their parents, students with little prior experience listening to books are likely to need some explicit instruction to "catch up."

Combining Good Books and Good Talk

Talking to learn and reading aloud are effective strategies for building academic language, but combining the two strategies is even more powerful! In addition to daily read alouds aimed at exposing students to a wide range of vocabulary, ideas, and information, students should engage regularly in instructional conversations that deepen comprehension by bringing together good books and good talk. (We used *Reading, Thinking and Caring*, the instructional conversations curriculum developed by Developmental Studies Center, a nonprofit educational organization.)

Writing to Learn

In addition to listening to written language, children need opportunities to compose their own stories or compositions. Writing is critical for both building language and comprehension and learning about print. Effective beginning reading programs contain a strong writing component.

As we mentioned earlier, writing is decontextualized by its very nature; writers do not have the luxury of gestures, facial expressions, vocal cues, or interactions that speakers use to gauge and convey meaning; they must use language alone to communicate. Because most children are interested in telling others about their ideas and experiences, writing provides incentive for paying attention to language. Young children who rely on context to convey their message—"That thing, over there," "She did it like this...," etc.—are forced to find words to get their meaning across in writing. Writing is a powerful venue for honing language skills and increasing word awareness—

thoughtful attention to how words work together to convey meaning.

Write every day. Kindergarten children need opportunities to write on a daily basis. At the beginning of the year, "writing" will generally take the form of drawing. However, drawing is more than a place-holder for writing. Drawing has many of the same characteristics as written language and creates a foundation for writing. Like writing, drawing is decontextualized and uses symbols to represent ideas, events, and feelings. Furthermore, children can be taught to attend to many qualities of good writing in their drawings—ideas, organization (composition), voice, description (details), etc. Of course, students should be encouraged to use whatever print knowledge they have in their writing. (For concrete suggestions for teaching and assessing beginning writing, see *Seeing with New Eyes*, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1999.)

Encourage inventive spelling. The benefits of writing are greatest in classrooms that encourage inventive spelling, and these benefits are greatest for low-readiness students. In addition to fostering an avid interest in the phonetic structure of words, inventive spellers are more prolific and eager writers. Inventive spelling appears, as Adams (1990) noted:

> incomparable for purposes of developing their (students) abilities to reflect on their own thoughts, to elaborate and organize their ideas, and to express themselves in print. Moreover, whether viewed at the level of text generation, sentence generation, or word generation, it is an activity that inherently requires children to think actively—and such activities are both invaluable and hard to come by in the classroom (pp. 386-387).

Additionally, because inventive spelling allows children to write quite independently, the teacher is freed to work with individuals and small groups in focused instruction.

Write a variety of texts. Just as their reading experiences need to be wide and varied, children also need opportunities for writing in a variety of forms:

- *Notebooks/journals/response-journals.* Writing daily enables children to have opportunities to select their own topic; in addition, providing writing prompts expands students' appreciation for the many things people can write about. (Teachers may want to use separate notebooks for these two different activities.)
- *Response to literature.* Children can respond in writing to read-alouds by making lists of words that describe a character, or lists of reasons why they think a character's actions are wise and unwise; creating Venn diagrams or other graphic organizers that compare and contrast characters' different points of view; using writing notebooks to collect evidence of what they know and what they are learning about a setting, concept or issue; and recording words and phrases that "sound good" to them or ideas from the story that strike them. These written responses need to occur on a regular basis.
- *Write in the content areas.* Kindergartners should be encouraged to bring their emerging writing skills to the science table, recording the growth

of plants, silk worms, brine shrimp, and describing what they see, hear, smell, taste, and touch both in and outside the classroom. In social studies, students can draw and label maps of the classroom, school and the community.

• *Dramatic play with literacy emphasis.* By adding reading and writing materials to dramatic play areas (Vukelich, 1990), the teacher will be promoting literacy learning. These materials can represent the following themes: a restaurant, grocery store, doctor, veterinarian, bank, or office, all of which are better than a housekeeping corner for fostering literacy. However, it is not enough to make reading and writing materials available. It is essential for teachers to model and regularly reinforce and expand how materials can be used as part of dramatic play, always keeping pace with children's expanding literacy.

• *Writing center.* Every kindergarten classroom needs a writing center with a variety of writing materials, including various colors and sizes of paper, forms, envelopes, scissors, pens and pencils, stapler, whole punchers, picture dictionaries, word processor, etc. Teachers can add mail boxes (milk cartons work well) so children can exchange notes with one another and with the teacher. Once again, it is rarely enough to simply have materials available. Teachers must demonstrate possibilities for using the materials—how to construct little books, the form for writing letters and addresses, writing to a favorite author or story character, etc. This use of materials is especially important for children who arrive at school with limited literacy experience.

• *Daily routines.* Kindergartners are eager to contribute their growing writing skills to classroom management and community. Students can assume responsibility by signing in each morning. They can help make signs about class routines and norms. Children can also get to know one another by registering opinions and data on charts, diagrams, graffiti boards, etc.

Dictation. In general, writing activities should encourage independent writing. However, when it is important to capture the content of students' words and ideas, children can dictate their "text" to a skilled reader, such as a teacher, parent, or an older buddy. Recall that the five-year-old who "wrote" the bird field notes subsequently dictated the text and that the two forms of writing yielded very different information about her abilities. Thus, paralleling the benefits of listening to challenging literature before children can read independently, dictation allows emergent writers to use (and teachers to assess) academic language in their "writing" before they are able to write fluently on their own.

The strategies of building oral and written language we have described need to be part of the kindergarten curriculum. In the next section we discuss our rationale for developmentally appropriate instruction of reading and writing in kindergarten and present a developmental sequence for teaching beginning reading.

An Instructional Approach and Routine for Teaching Reading and Writing in Kindergarten

Because written text is a major source of academic language, it is desirable for children to read on their own. Kindergartners with limited literacy

experience who lack basic print concepts—the very children for whom literacy learning is most critical—may need extra time to learn decoding skills. It is, therefore, important for students to begin formal reading instruction in kindergarten.

For kindergarten teachers, probably no topic is more controversial than teaching beginning reading and writing. While teachers commonly have taught such "emergent" literacy skills as letter names and sounds, concepts of print, and a few sight words, recently adopted state standards for reading and language arts in California now list content that used to be more commonly taught in first grade (California Department of Education, 1999). Examples of the new standards include:

- phoneme awareness (especially blending and segmentation)
- reading and writing consonant-short vowel-consonant words
- sight words

Two common reactions to more formal reading instruction in kindergarten are that: (a) students are not developmentally ready to learn to read, and (b) an academic emphasis will crowd out other important goals (such as language development and socialization).

In this section we first consider reasons for the stronger emphasis on reading and writing. Then, we examine why learning to read and write is unnatural for most students. Finally, we propose an instructional approach that is developmentally appropriate and that still leaves room for language development and community.

Why the New Emphasis on Reading and Writing?

We maintain that reading and writing can and should be taught in kindergarten to all children as long as the instruction is developmentally appropriate. Currently, when reading receives more serious attention in kindergarten, it typically seems to occur in more affluent schools where parents want a more academic curriculum and where students are deemed "ready" for this kind of instruction. Many of these children have received substantial informal reading instruction from parents during storybook reading (Bus & VanIJzendoorn, 1988). Other students, often from homes offering few if any informal reading experiences, are regarded as not "developmentally" ready. However, we contend that the "not ready" students are most in need of serious reading instruction because they will need more time to learn to read. It is important to "take" this time *before* first grade rather than after.

Students who do not learn to read "on time," generally do not catch up. Our current system of schooling is rather unforgiving of students who are not fluent readers by the end of second grade. Those who are behind in the early grades frequently are still behind in the higher grades (Juel, 1988). Furthermore, these same students who struggle with reading early on tend to avoid reading in succeeding grades, thereby losing the opportunity to learn through reading—a major source of cognitive and language growth (Stanovich, 1986).

Some students need more instructional time. Students begin school with very different levels of emergent literacy (Allington & Cunningham, 1996). Some have been read to over 1000 hours and already know their letters and sounds, and a

fair number of sight words (Adams, 1990). Others do not know any letters or sounds and cannot turn the pages of a book in the proper direction. These latter students are going to need more time to learn to read.

Some students also need additional time because they have more difficulty figuring out the alphabetic nature of reading regardless of how much they were read to at home (Adams, 1990; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). One reason involves difficulty developing phonological and phonemic awareness, an issue that we discuss in greater detail later on.

Strong predictors of early reading success. Children may begin kindergarten with limited knowledge of "school" language; some cannot count to five or identify four primary colors. It is tempting to conclude that these students are not "ready" for reading instruction because language development is a more critical instructional goal and even a prerequisite to learning to read. This conclusion does not seem to be justified. While language development is crucial for long-term reading success and needs to be fostered in kindergarten, it is not a strong predictor of learning to read by the end of first grade. Stronger predictors of learning to read are (a) phoneme awareness, (b) print knowledge (names and sounds), and (c) concepts of print (Juel,1988). An exclusive focus on language development in kindergarten will not compensenate for children's lack of phoneme awareness and print knowledge. It must also be recognized that developing language is a long-term endeavor that starts in kindergarten but must continue throughout the grades.

Students can learn to read if instruction is developmentally appropriate. While students start school at widely different levels, current curriculum and instruction are geared to the students in the "middle." When students do not succeed in such programs, it is tempting to conclude they are not "developmentally ready." While it may be true that they are not developmentally ready for that program of instruction, they are still developmentally ready to learn if the curriculum and instruction is made more appropriate. In other words, instead of focusing on whether students are developmentally ready for a set curriculum, we need to ask whether we are providing students developmentally appropriate instruction.

Characteristics of developmentally appropriate instruction include: (a) taking advantage of students' desire to learn culturally relevant competencies—reading and writing, (b) continually ensuring that students both are and feel successful, (c) beginning where students are, (d) engaging them in active rather than passive activities, (e) supporting and scaffolding complex processes, (f) providing opportunities to apply skills and knowledge in meaningful situations, and (g) making provisions for students' learning at different rates while de-emphasizing comparisons and competition (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997).

Writing contributes to both language development and growth in spelling, decoding, and phoneme awareness. Effective beginning reading programs include a strong writing component for several reasons. Extended writing in which students are encouraged to describe past events and experiences is a powerful way for students to practice and develop more formal kinds of language. Writing also contributes to

an understanding of the functions of print and enhances students' interest in literacy (Holdaway, 1979; Sulzby, 1985). Such writing may begin with scribble writing in response to pictures that students have drawn.

Furthermore, writing makes a significant contribution to students' understanding of the alphabetic nature of reading and spelling. This includes phoneme awareness and knowledge of spelling-sound relationships, as well as knowledge of concepts of print. As mentioned in the preceding section, there is considerable evidence that encouraging inventive (or phonic) spelling contributes to spelling development and an understanding of how sounds map on to print (Chomsky, 1979; Clarke, 1989; Treiman, 1993). Additionally, more formal instruction in phoneme awareness and spelling enhances growth in inventive spelling (Tangel & Blachman, 1992).

To summarize, reading and writing instruction that is more formal but still developmentally appropriate can help give kindergarten students the extra time they need to acquire the fundamental skills needed to meet the rigorous standards in grades one and two.

Learning to Read is Unnatural

Before describing the instructional approach and routine that we are recommending to kindergarten teachers, we need to briefly explain the theory and research that influence our thinking. The paradigm that guides our view of language is wholistic and constructivist in nature because humans seem to be "wired" or naturally disposed to learn language and construct their understanding of words and concepts (Liberman, 1997). Language is simply a characteristic of human behavior—all human societies possess language. Reading and writing, on the other hand, are not found in every culture. Wherever they occur, there are formal procedures for instruction. Learning to read and write requires a significant amount of associative learning as well as an understanding of the alphabetic nature of reading—a difficult cognitive insight.

Beginning readers use context as a decoding strategy. Naive beginning readers naturally rely on context to "read" print (Juel, 1991). This use of context takes several forms: predicting words from what has been read, using pictures, and memorizing stories. Studies by Gough and Hillinger (1980) further indicate that some beginning readers may even focus on such idiosyncratic clues as a smudged letter or the bent corner of a flashcard.

Attending to spelling-sound strategies is a more powerful decoding strategy. Adams (1990) notes that alphabetic languages such as English and Spanish are a marvelously efficient invention because they enable people to read any number of words without having to memorize each, one-by-one. Contrary to popular notions that some students learn to read by sight and others through phonics, all students need to understand and use spelling-sound relationships in order to become fluent readers. Students who stick with a sight approach usually get bogged down in second grade where they cannot keep up with the large number of new words that are being encountered in reading.

Spelling-sound strategies are unnatural for many students. There are at least three reasons why beginning readers prefer to attend to context

rather than letter-sound relationships. First, attending to spelling-sound relationships in words is based, in part, on phoneme awareness; yet most students are not naturally aware that words are made up of phonemes—a difficult, abstract insight (Liberman, 1997). Prior to formal schooling, children do not have to be aware of the units of sound in speech in order to speak and communicate effectively. Furthermore, phonemes are difficult to discern because they are merged together in words (co-articulated); this is particularly true for vowels (Moats, 1995).

Second, in English the spelling patterns that represent the sounds are also complex, especially for vowels where there are over 45 common spellings for 18 vowel sounds (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). Learning how sounds are represented by print can be much more time consuming than just learning the sounds.

Finally, the initial application of spelling-sound strategies can be unnaturally slow and laborious, in marked contrast to the automatic decoding of skilled readers. Beginning readers want to sound like good readers and would rather not take the time to attend to all the spelling patterns within a word. Furthermore, since slow and laborious decoding interferes with comprehension, children may not naturally make the connection that carefully attending to print is the pathway to gaining access to the interesting stories and information in books.

Explicit, Systematic Instruction in Beginning Reading in Kindergarten

In this section on teaching reading and writing in kindergarten, we begin by outlining a developmental sequence that begins with concepts of print and playful phonological awareness activities followed by more formal instruction in phoneme awareness, phonics, and sight words. We then discuss the pros and cons of various ways of making beginning reading materials easy enough to read and propose a kind of "hybrid" text that seems more developmentally appropriate. Finally, we describe a lesson structure for explicit, systematic instruction in beginning reading—one that supports and scaffolds the complex processes in beginning reading in a developmentally appropriate manner.

A developmental sequence for teaching beginning reading. Stahl (1997) proposes a model of reading acquisition that begins with an ***awareness stage*** during which students learn four aspects of the "written/oral language" relationship. The four aspects are:

- functions (the purpose of written language is to entertain, inform, and persuade);
- conventions (writing and reading from top to bottom, left to right; sentences and words);
- form of print (letters)
- phoneme awareness (spoken words can be broken down into sounds)

Teaching young children the functions of print increases their intrinsic motivation and helps them understand why literacy is both interesting and important.

Next, during the ***accuracy stage***, students learn to use spelling-sound relationships to decode simple texts. Here students gain an understanding of the alphabetic nature of reading and writing and thereby realize that using context and memorizing sight words are

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not the best strategies for learning how to read. Reading at this stage often is rather laborious because students have to sound out so many words. Chall (1983) once described this stage as "grunting and groaning."

Finally, during the ***automaticity stage***, beginning readers' word recognition begins to become more rapid or automatic. Extensive practice plays a key role here because such fluent reading seems to be based upon experience reading the thousands of different spelling patterns that occur in connected text.

While students progress through the stages at different rates, they are generally expected to be fluent ("automatic") readers at least by the end of the second grade. Since third grade marks the critical transition from *learning to read* to *reading to learn*, it is essential for students to have developed the reading fluency that is a prerequisite for reading comprehension.

The implications of the above sequence for kindergarten are that we need to recognize the importance of the awareness stage as a prerequisite to the accuracy stage. Clearly, there is justification for starting kindergarten with much of the more traditional reading instruction that involves concepts of print. The question remains: when and how can beginning readers make the transition from one level of reading to the next? In addressing this dilemma, we have considered not only the appropriateness of various instruction strategies but also the usefulness of different types of beginning reading text.

Types of beginning reading text. Since beginning readers cannot read regular books, beginning reading materials have to be simplified in some manner. Historically, there have been three main approaches. (1) High frequency ***sight word readers*** such as Dick and Jane make reading more accessible by repeating sight words that have been carefully introduced and reviewed in a sequential manner. (2) ***Phonic readers*** control words according to the spelling-sound relationships that have been taught. One variety of phonic readers (linguistic readers) emphasizes word families (Dan can fan a tan man.). Another type of phonic reader (synthetic phonics readers) focuses on individual phoneme elements (The ant sat on the man.). (3) A third and more recent approach to simplifying text entails the use of ***predictable readers*** in which a sentence pattern is repeated throughout a story (I love my father. I love my mother. I love my sister.).

There are advantages and disadvantages to each of the above types of text. Predictable readers give students who want to read a sense of success; they also are useful for teaching concepts of print. A disadvantage is that they encourage students to rely on context as a strategy for recognizing words. In this respect, predictable readers, when used too long, give students false messages about both what successful reading is and what is involved in ***learning*** to read.

An advantage of sight word readers is the relative ease with which many beginning readers can learn sight words. Knowing some sight words enables beginning readers to read different stories as long as the same words are used. A disadvantage is that students are more inclined to rely on context and word memorization. Such decoding strategies are counterproductive in second grade where students cannot easily memorize the many new words that are being

introduced.

Finally, an advantage of phonic readers is that they enable and encourage students to use spelling-sound strategies even when their knowledge of phonics is quite limited. A disadvantage is that phonic decoding strategies take time to learn and initially there is relatively little text reading. Phonic readers can also be rather unnatural sounding and may use decodable words that are unknown to most students (The ant lit on the can.).

A rationale for "hybrid" text. Shefelbine (1993) proposed combining the different types of text in ways that maximize their advantages and minimize their disadvantages, hence the term "*hybrid text.*" He developed reading materials that initially were predictable but added and repeated sight words across stories. For example, the first story utilized an "I see..." pattern, the second, "I see the...," and the third, "I can see the..." Such a combination seems most appropriate for students who are still in the awareness stage of learning to read. While students are reading such text, they are also learning letter-sound relationships and phonemic awareness (especially blending and segmentation). Once students have a firmer grasp of concepts of print as well as knowledge of some consonants and a short vowel, phonic words start appearing in the text. (I can see the ***ant***. The ***ant sat*** on the ***man***.) Over succeeding lessons, the text contains more and more phonic (decodable) words along with a substantial number of sight words but with fewer and fewer predictable sentence patterns. Note how the reading materials evolve to support strategies that are more appropriate for the accuracy stage of learning to read. Developmentally, hybrid text helps students feel successful when they begin reading instruction but still encourages them to use the unnatural print-driven strategies that will eventually lead to independent, fluent reading.

A Proposed Lesson Structure

In this section we describe our approach to developmentally appropriate instruction in letter-sound relationships, blending, and the alphabetic principle using hybrid text. Please note that such instruction does not begin at the very start of the school year. Formal decoding instruction is preceded by less structured activities to build the skills and understandings generally acquired during the awareness stage.

The lesson structure is made up of the following seven parts: a) rereading the previous story chart, b) phoneme play, c) introducing and reviewing sounds and blending decodable words, d) introducing and reviewing sight words, e) reading a new story chart, (f) guided spelling and segmentation, and (g) practice reading "little book" versions of the story charts. The entire lesson lasts from 30 to 40 minutes. Kindergarten teachers often break it into two 20-minute sections. It is important to consistently follow and complete all parts of the lesson plan on a ***daily*** basis because students need regular practice with each component of the lesson. Students also become more comfortable and confident when the procedures and activities for teaching beginning reading follow the same daily routine. In the following lesson components and routines, note how success in learning complex processes is increased by (a) not teaching too much that is

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new too fast, (b) constantly reviewing what has already been introduced, (c) modeling and then carefully guiding students through critical skills such as phoneme blending and segmentation, (d) applying lesson content to connected text, and (e) emphasizing the connections between reading and writing. Overall, there is an emphasis on mastery rather than "exposure."

Flexible grouping. Students are grouped according to their knowledge of phoneme awareness, letter sounds, and sight words. Because students learn at different rates even when extra instruction is provided, they periodically may need to be regrouped. We should also note that the pace at which content is covered varies across groups. Some groups need two lessons for each new story while other groups only need one. The basic principle is: start where students are and proceed as fast as they can master the content.

Seating Arrangement. While some teachers have students sit on the rug, we recommend that they sit on chairs in two rows or a small semicircle facing the story chart and the chalkboard.

For the guided spelling and segmentation portion of the lesson, students need to sit at their desks where writing should be most comfortable.

Arrows. Arrows under letters, words, and sentences are used in most parts of the lesson because students have a difficult time understanding the importance of orientation and left-to-right sequence. It is important to draw arrows in a different color than printed letters so students do not confuse arrows as part of the system of print (see Figure 2).

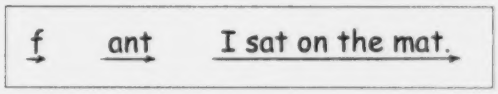

Figure 2: Examples of how arrows are used.

Rereading the previous story chart. Here the students chorally reread the previous story as the teacher points to the words in a poster-sized story chart. Students need this kind of support because they have a difficult time reading text independently in their little books. With the chart, the teacher is also able to model and request certain strategies such as blending decodable words. Rereading the story also makes it easier for the students to independently read their little book versions of the story chart.

Sentences with decodable words are read twice: the first time, decodable words are sounded ("*Sound*") and then blended ("*Read*"); then the sentence is reread without sounding out words.

After reading the story, the teacher asks comprehension questions.

Phoneme play. Phoneme play consists of a series of phoneme awareness activities that do not involve print. The routines build a foundation for phonemic skills that are necessary for reading and spelling. The phoneme play lessons follow a sequence that incrementally becomes more difficult in at least two ways. Students start with words and syllables and then move on to onset and rimes and then phonemes. Tasks begin with identifying sound units and blending, then bring in segmentation, and conclude with manipulation. This portion of the lesson lasts less than five minutes.

While developing phoneme awareness, the teacher visually represents units of sound by using blanks for phonemes and boxes for words, sylla-

bles, and rimes. For example, to practice oral segmentation with words such as ***ran***, ***sat***, and ***ant***, the teacher draws three blanks on the board and points to them in succession as students say the phoneme that corresponds to each blank—/rrr/ for the first blank, /aaa/ for the second, and /nnn/ for the third.

Sounds and decodable words. In this part of the lesson, phonics is explicitly and systematically taught. There are three basic routines: (a) introducing new spelling-sound relationships, (b) reviewing previously taught phonics relationships on a daily basis, and (c) blending and then reading decodable words. A major objective here is ensuring that students overlearn spelling-sound relationships. Phoneme awareness is also being developed, particularly when blending decodable words; here the oral blending skills that were practiced during phoneme play are now applied to print.

Students begin blending and reading words as soon as a few consonants and a single short vowel have been taught. As more consonants and short vowels are taught, the number of decodable patterns grows dramatically.

As the students chorally say the sounds of spellings presented on cards and as they blend and read decodable words written on the board, the teacher monitors their accuracy and provides extra instruction when needed. When blending words, the teacher carefully shows the students how to say the sounds in a word slowly without pausing between sounds. It is easier to "put the sounds together" for mmmaaannn than for mmm (pause) aaa (pause) nnn.

Sight words. Sight words are included in the instructional sequence for two reasons. Students are taught sight words early on because they have not learned enough letter sounds and have had limited practice with phoneme blending. Irregular sight words, that is, words which cannot be decoded through phonics, are also covered.

The procedure for learning sight words involves introducing a word in a sentence and then having the student read and spell the word when presented on a card. Orally spelling sight words by letter name is a powerful strategy for learning sight words because students' attention is focused on all the letters in a left to right sequence.

Reviewing sight words on a daily basis is necessary for mastery learning. Words that are troublesome are reviewed a second time during the lesson.

Reading the new story chart. The students chorally read the new story in the same way that they reread the previous story chart at the beginning of the lesson. The teacher directs students to blend and then read decodable words even when students may be able to predict the word from context. This "directed" blending procedure counteracts beginning readers' natural tendency to rely on context rather than on spelling-sound patterns.

Because the stories are mostly made up of sight words and decodable words, stories are ***not*** first read to the students by the teacher. Students feel empowered when they can read these stories without first hearing them.

Guided spelling and segmentation. In this section of the lesson, writing is used to reinforce reading and elements of reading are applied to writing. Spelling is "guided" in the sense that the teacher provides enough assistance so all students successfully complete each part of this activity. There are

rather specific procedures for giving help at different levels. Note that students are NOT studying a spelling list on which they will be tested; rather they are learning spelling strategies that can be applied to many words.

Segmentation is included in the activity heading because phoneme segmentation is being practiced and applied while students write decodable words. In order to write the word mat, the student has to be able to orally segment the word into /mmm/ /aaa/ /t/.

There is a standard format to the spelling routine that begins with writing the spellings for two sounds. Then the students write the spellings for the beginning, middle, or last sound in two words. Next, they write two decodable words. Finally, they write a sentence that may contain some sight words (see Figure 3).

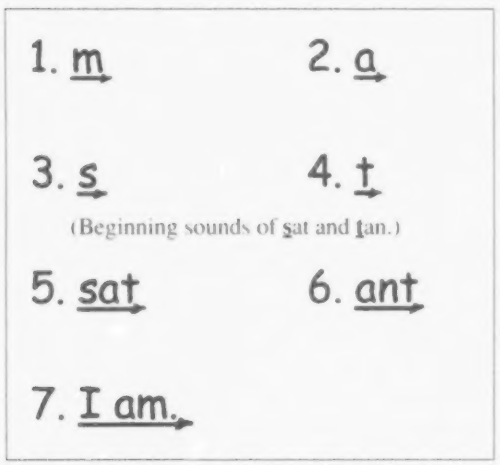

Figure 3:
An example of students' guided spelling.

Practice reading. In this final activity, students sit at their desks and quietly read aloud to themselves the three most recent stories. Here, teachers pass out a "little book" version of the story that was introduced on the chart. The little books are made from two 8½ by 11 black-line masters that are printed on both sides. These are cut in half, folded, and stapled into an 8-page booklet. The stories are reread as many as three times to develop confidence and to begin to build frequency. The teacher and any assistants or volunteers walk around and listen to each child read at least three pages of text. Informal records of students reading accuracy are kept. After students have read the three stories, they can read earlier stories or other material that is at their level. At other times in the day, students may color the illustrations in their little books.

Summary

The phrase "a caring learning community" describes both the classroom context necessary for students to achieve maximum benefit from our program and the kind of community which our program helps to create. If the program and the classroom community were discrete entities like chickens and eggs, this would be a chicken and egg problem. However, the caring nature of the classroom community is something that gradually grows as the year unfolds. It is nurtured by many classroom experiences and interactions, the language arts program providing many of these nurturing experiences. Likewise, the language arts program grows in strength and depth as it is in turn nurtured by the caring nature of the community.

What Are The Parts of Our Program?

Building a caring community. If children in a classroom feel liked and respected by their teacher and fellow stu-

dents, they will experience a sense of belonging; if they achieve success in learning activities that are meaningful and important to them, they will experience a sense of competence; if they are able to influence the course of events in the classroom through suggestions, requests, and the exercise of meaningful choice, they will experience a sense of autonomy.

These three things—meaningful autonomy, a sense of belonging, and competence—are basic human needs. When a school or classroom community creates the conditions that cause these needs to be met for the children and teachers in them, we call these communities caring communities. When children realize that they are in such a community, they become attached to that community. They try to live up to its values and realize the logic of treating others with the same kindness and respect that they experience as a member of the community (Solomon et al., in press).

Caring learning communities are not easy to establish. In many situations they can be very difficult, for they require teachers to 1) establish a caring and trusting relationship with each child, 2) facilitate caring relationships among the children, and 3) teach each child the skills, habits, and understandings that enable them to progress socially, ethically, and intellectually. Our experience and that of others indicate that a caring community is an essential condition for helping students develop into good readers as well as good people.

Supporting language development and listening comprehension. We have argued in this paper that two separate but mutually reinforcing aspects of the language arts curriculum need to be combined with an explicit focus on building a caring community in order to provide students with optimal opportunities to learn to read and to care about others. Because language development and listening comprehension involve understanding an essentially limitless body of knowledge, we have argued that they are best fostered in a wide variety of open-ended formal and informal literacy learning activities. Instruction in these areas and in concepts of print is most effective and efficient when it is embedded in open-ended, meaning centered activities such as listening to and talking about a book read aloud, engaging in dramatic play, writing using inventive spelling, and understanding and following the instructions of a teacher who talks like an author.

Decoding. Conversely, beginning reading involves understanding the alphabetic nature of reading—a difficult cognitive insight which includes phoneme awareness and knowledge of letter–sound relationships. Here, instruction is most effective and efficient when it is direct, focused, scaffolded, systematic, and mastery oriented. Furthermore, we maintain that decoding instruction is best done in small groups with students grouped and regrouped according to their current alphabetic knowledge. Finally, we believe specially designed "hybrid" texts contribute to the success of beginning readers by allowing for a smoother transition from the predictable texts that develop concepts of print to the decodable texts that encourage the development of print-based strategies.

Ways Literacy Builds Community

While we have not gone into much detail about the many components that go into creating a caring

community, we would like to close by outlining the mutually reinforcing relationship between a caring classroom community and our approaches to developing children's literacy.

Reading aloud. Reading aloud to the entire class engaging, values-rich literature is an important instructional component in our program. Hearing and discussing well-written text rich in academic language and content will help students build their vocabulary and knowledge of the world. Additionally, sharing the experience of good literature in a whole class setting creates bonds between teacher and students and among students. Such bonds form part of the force working to create a caring community.

Prosocial story content. The content of many of the stories helps children reflect on their own behaviors and attitudes and build their understanding of and empathy for their classmates. In the *Reading, Thinking, and Caring* (Developmental Studies Center, 1998) curriculum we used, all of the stories have a social or prosocial theme. The curriculum unit designed for each book contains a number of correlated activities to help children focus on and apply concepts such as kindness, forgiveness, and fairness to their lives. Each unit contains home activities in which students interview their parents about important ideas in the books that have been read to them. When students share the results of their family conversations with their classmates, they are getting to know one another at deeper levels than ordinary playground and classroom interactions permit, and this too contributes to the force working to create a caring community.

Collaborative learning activities. Many of the activities used to help students deepen their understanding of text are done in collaboration with a partner. When the teacher carefully structures this collaborative work, helping students develop the skills and attitudes they need to work fairly and respectfully with one another, these collaborative experiences further build the force working to create a caring community.

The experience of success. Finally, the decoding instruction uses hybrid texts to increase students initial success and moves at a pace to insure mastery. Thus students experience early success, which is so important to their need for competence.

Ways A Caring Community Builds Literacy

Helps support students' positive self-concept. Students are grouped and regrouped for instruction in phonics and phonemic awareness based on what they know and how fast they master the instruction. This is done so that students do not waste time learning what they already know and so that students are nor pushed to try to learn new things before they have mastered the old. Such grouping raises the age-old concern that placing students in identifiable groups based on what they know will stigmatize them and undermine the self-esteem of the students in the less advanced groups. However, in a caring community students are discouraged from seeing their classmates as their competitors and encouraged to see each of them as possessing worthwhile qualities—although not necessarily the same qualities in the same quantities. Furthermore, children are encouraged

to compete with themselves, to set goals for self-improvement and to celebrate that improvement. In such an environment the potentially harmful effects of grouping students for reading instruction based on their reading ability are substantially ameliorated or eliminated.

Supports risk-taking in talk and in thought. Anyone who has ever been a member of a book club or participated in a well-run seminar knows something about the power of conversation to enhance comprehension. Anyone who has ever been in a poorly run seminar or class also knows something about the power of others, be it teacher or fellow students, to shut down thinking and to leave one feeling battered, inept, angry, or bored. In a caring community students are taught how to have respectful conversations and how to listen to one another. Likewise, in a caring community students can risk thinking for themselves and sharing their thinking, for they know that they will be taken seriously and not derided, even if others do not agree with them.

Supports the growth of academic discourse. A basic tenet of a social constructivist perspective on learning is that the give and take of social discourse literally helps us socially construct our understanding, and that that understanding will be deeper and richer than we could have achieved on our own. It is the presence of the caring community that makes it possible for the social discourse in the classroom to be the kind of discourse that expands and deepens the understanding of all participants in the conversation, whether that conversation is with the teacher, the whole class, or a partner.

Essentially in creating a caring community and teaching children how to talk and listen respectfully to one another, the teacher is providing the context for and instruction and practice in academic discourse. Academic discourse, or the skill of talking with others for the purpose of reaching a better understanding, is an important skill for progressing through the school system and for success in college or in jobs that require collaborative problem solving. Most students have no other place to learn this type of discourse. It is very different from normal everyday conversation. It goes way beyond "Dinner's ready," "Let's play soccer," "What did you do today?" or even "Where did the story take place?".

Provides the foundation for good writing. When students feel safe to use their language productively to deepen their understanding about the books that are being read to them, they are building their ability to use academic language as well as comprehend it. If they can use such language in their conversations, if they can consider alternatives and offer justifications for their thinking, these skills will eventually transfer to their writing. Of course, they will eventually need to learn the many conventions of written language and how to make their writing clear, succinct, and stylish. But for now, getting their ideas down through drawing and invented (phonetic) spelling will help them develop the ability to have, express, and defend interesting ideas and observations—and this is at the core of good writing. Thus, students' writing abilities are honed in the friendly but challenging academic discussions they have with their classmates and teacher about books, their classroom, and their world.

Increases students' desire to

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read. Lastly, we turn briefly to the role of community and children's motivation to read. One of the more disturbing facts reported in *Becoming a Nation of Readers* was that, while many of our students eventually learn to read, few do read once out of school (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985). An important goal of our work and of most reading and language arts programs is that students develop a love of reading and be well on their way to becoming lifelong readers when they leave the primary grades. Again, a caring community is an important ally. If students experience their classroom as a caring community and reading is a valued skill in the community, students will come to value the skill of reading and want to be good at it. As students in the community read and talk with pleasure about the books they have read, other students will be motivated to want to read those same books. Because the community provides a forum for students to tell others about their books, it provides a further motivation to read, to read in order to have something to talk about with others. Also, the friendly but challenging academic conversations students have about books, both those guided by their teacher and those with partners and friends, not only increase students' understanding of the books, but also increase their enjoyment of them.

This close connection between community and reading and language arts should not be surprising to us. For without community there would be no need for reading, writing, listening or speaking. Our literacy arises out of our need to communicate with others in our community. It is the relationship with caring others that initiates and helps us expand our literacy. As we encounter the world of books and learn to read, our community expands to include the authors and characters who speak to us from printed pages. Our interaction with these authors and characters further expands our ideas and knowledge and therefore our literacy, and so on without limit as long as we keep reading, thinking, and talking with others about what we read.

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Readers Theatre: A Creative Tool for Strengthening Skills of Emergent Readers

Michael Jordan and Adrienne Harrell

Readers theatre has long been recognized as an effective approach for providing authentic reading practice. Recent research has validated it as a powerful tool in teaching reading fluency (rate, accuracy, phrasing, pitch, stress, and expressiveness) as well as comprehension. This article provides step-by-step instructions in ways to adapt readers theatre for emergent readers. Using a language experience approach or shared writing, the students are engaged in an active retelling of the story being read in order to create a readers theatre script. The students are then involved in presenting the script through expressive oral readings, puppet presentations, or choral reading. These approaches provide multiple opportunities for rereading for authentic purposes, supporting the students' acquisition of sight words, expressive reading, and comprehension.

Ms. Fabersham's kindergarten class is listening to her read *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak (1963). As she finishes reading the book, Ms. Fabersham asks the children, "Who are the characters in this book?"

Jeremy raises his hand quickly and says, "Max is the little boy." Ms. Fabersham smiles and nods her head. "You are right, Jeremy. Max is the little boy in the story." She writes the word *Max* on the white board next to her chair. "Who else is in this story?" Maria raises her hand very tentatively. "His mother tells him he is a wild thing."

"Yes," replies Ms. Fabersham. "Max's mother is in the story too." She writes *Max's mother* on the white board next to the word *Max*. "There are wild things in the story!" states Chan emphatically. "You are right, Chan," replies Ms. Fabersham. Ms. Fabersham shows the children a picture from the book. "How many wild things are in this picture, Chan? Let's all count them."

The children count aloud with Ms. Fabersham as she shares a picture in the storybook and the children agree that they see *five different wild* things in the picture. Ms. Fabersham adds five wild things to the list of characters on the white board. "We can write a play about Max and the wild things," suggests Ms. Fabersham. "Then we can make puppets and act out our play."

Ms. Fabersham is assisting her students in identifying characters from one of their favorite books in preparation for engaging them in the writing of their first script for a readers theatre activity. Though some might see the use of readers theatre with emergent readers as a challenge, Ms. Fabersham clearly under-

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stands how the active exploration of a favorite text enhances students' motivation to engage in multiple readings of familiar material. Her approach follows research findings that show that readers' rate, accuracy, comprehension, and the ability to read in meaningful phrases are significantly improved by repeated reading practice (Dowhower, 1987).

Involving students with enjoyable and exciting active reading procedures provides the key to fluency and higher levels of comprehension gain, through a natural process of repeated readings and interactive transactions with language. A natural and fun process for providing students with these types of interactions is through a strategy of theatrical interpretations of valued text in a method commonly referred to as **readers theatre** (Busching, 1981).

Readers theatre is an interpretive presentation of text by a group of readers in a nonthreatening, controlled, and prepared setting. Typically, a group of students read prepared scripts of interesting and important literature and/or curricular materials. These readings provide students with an opportunity to explore the text itself and to become involved with the process of rehearsal and repeated readings, thereby increasing fluency and comprehension.

The method of presentation in the classroom may vary greatly in relation to the confines and capabilities of the setting itself. Students may sit or stand, in formal or informal arrangements, communicating primarily through the use of vocal inflection, gestures, and facial expressions (Coger & White, 1973). Scripts are written so that as many students as possible are involved in the presentation, either singly, in pairs, or small groups. Those not directly involved become the audience members where listening skills can be emphasized and reinforced to enhance their later involvement in the presentation.

Readers theatre provides classroom teachers with an opportunity to involve students with an interactive, interpretive process without the constraints of typical theatrical endeavors involving elaborate props, costumes, memorization of lines, lengthy rehearsals, and scenery. Although these elements are not entirely necessary for the success of the presentations, the use of minimal props and costumes might enhance the students' interest and enjoyment of the process. The creation of such additional elements, however, could be used to give students not directly involved in the presentation an opportunity to display individual creative skills.

Readers Theatre with Emergent Readers

To show some adaptations necessary for the use of readers theatre with emergent readers, let's return to Ms. Fabersham's kindergarten class.

> Ms. Fabersham reads the first two pages of the book again and asks the children to tell her what is happening. "Max has a wolf suit on and he's acting like a wild thing," says Juanita.
>
> "Yes, that's what is happening," replies Ms. Fabersham. "We can have someone say that in our play so that everyone will understand what's happening. Ms. Fabersham stands and writes on a large piece of chart paper with a marker. As she writes Juanita's words she sounds them out so

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the children can see the connection between the sounds she is making and letters she is writing.

"Let's read this together," Ms. Fabersham says. "The first word is NARRATOR. That's someone who tells the story while the puppets act it out. The children read along with her as she moves her hand along under the words. "Max has a wolf suit on and he's acting like a wild thing."

"Why didn't we read the first word?" asks Jeremy. "That word just tells us who is talking," Ms. Fabersham says as she points to the word NARRATOR. "One of you will be the narrator and this tells you that it's your turn to talk." "What do you think Max is saying as he acts like a wild thing?" asks Ms. Fabersham.

"Gr–r–r," says Sandra.

"We'll write Max's words like this," says Ms. Fabersham as she writes *MAX: Gr-r-r* on the chart paper.

Ms. Fabersham walks the children through the story taking their dictation as they retell the story while she is modeling the writing of the script. The children get many chances to reread the words she writes as they decide what to say next. Because the wild things do not actually talk in the story, the children are imaginative in creating unique sounds for each of the five wild things.

Their completed script looks like this:

NARRATOR: Max has a wolf suit on and he's acting like a wild thing.

MAX: Gr-r-r

MOTHER: Wild thing!

MAX: I'll eat you up!

MOTHER: That's it. You're going to bed without any supper!

NARRATOR: That night a forest grew in Max's room. The trees and vines got really big and an ocean came by. Max got into a boat.

MAX: I'll sail away for days and days and weeks and weeks.

NARRATOR: Max came to the place where the wild things are.

WILD THING 1: aaaarrrgggghhhh! aaaarrrgggghhhh!

WILD THING 2: Screetch! Screetch!

WILD THING 3: OOOOOOOOh-h-h!

WILD THING 4: Whooooooooooo-o-o!

WILD THING 5: Brrraaaaaapppppp! Brrraaaaaapppppp!

MAX: BE STILL!

NARRATOR: The wild things were scared and they stopped making noise. They made Max the king.

MAX: Let the rumpus begin!

NARRATOR: The wild things and Max danced and climbed and made lots of noise. But soon Max was tired and wanted to go back home.

MAX: I will go back home now.

WILD THINGS: Oh no! We love you so!

NARRATOR: But Max got into his boat and sailed home. When he got to his room he found a surprise.

MAX: My dinner! And it's still hot!

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This example shows how language experiences and shared writing is used with emergent readers and writers to create a readers theatre script from a favorite story. Once the script is complete, the children will spend time reading and rereading the script in order to attain fluency and expression in the reading of the story.

Ms. Fabersham knows from experience that the use of minimal props or simple puppets increases the emergent readers' enjoyment of the rereading of the story. She therefore assists the students in making stick puppets for the characters and makes copies of the script to attach to the backsides of the puppets. The children take turns playing the different parts in the play, reading and rereading the script as they play with the puppets and act out the story. Ms. Fabersham also notices the children rereading the script from the large chart, pointing to the words with a yardstick as they read. See Figure 1 to see an example of a stick puppet with an attached script.

Step-by-Step

The steps in implementing readers theatre with emergent readers and writers are:

- ***Choosing the text*** - Text may be drawn from materials which fulfill requirements of the classroom curriculum, but should contain elements of high interest to the students. The selection should not necessarily be limited to literature, but might also include instructional textual material, poetry, and music. The text may contain unfamiliar language and/or vocabulary in order to challenge the students and to give them the opportunity to explore language in an unfamiliar context. Readers theatre offers a non-

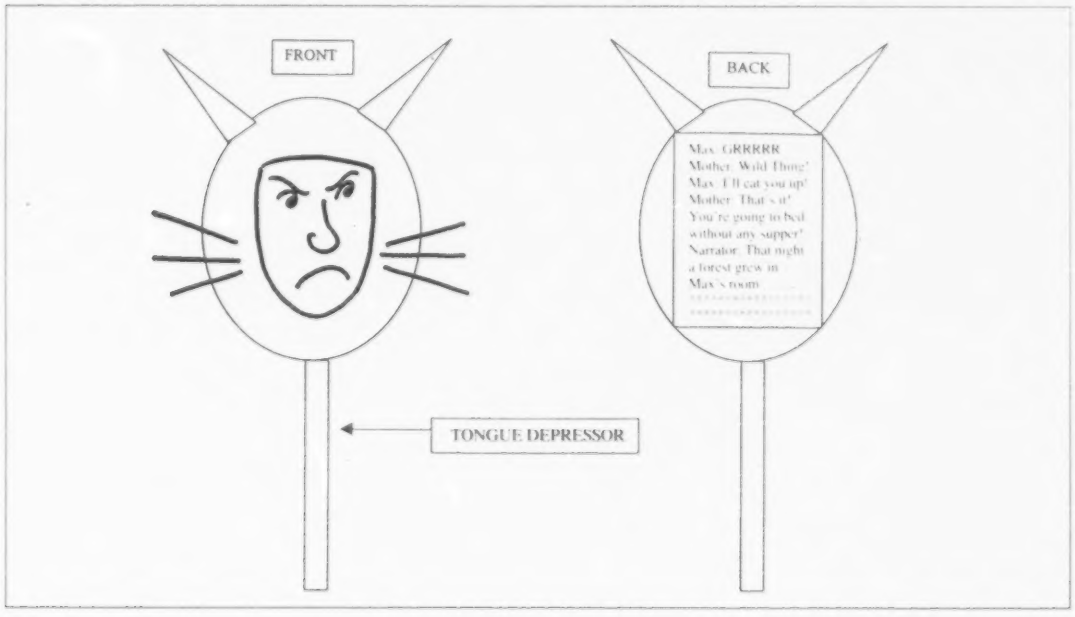

Figure 1. Stick puppet with readers theatre script attached.

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threatening and supportive environment for students to practice repeated reading and develop the fluency so vital to increased comprehension.

- ***Writing the Script*** - Although commercially produced readers theatre scripts are readily available, they are not difficult to write and the students benefit greatly when involved in the writing project. The process is simplified somewhat when texts are chosen which contain direct dialogue, necessitating only minor interjection of narration to clarify the story action. The characters of the presentation must first be identified and their dialogue is taken directly from the text. The amplification of the story through narration is a good way to utilize strong readers and may even be divided between two narrators. The dialogue should be adapted to the appropriate age level of the students with consideration given to providing a variety of skill levels to meet the needs of individual students. The goal should always be one of creating a high degree of success for those students involved in the presentation.

- ***Preparing the Scripts*** - Scripts may be attached to the inside of simple file folders for added strength. This protects the scripts and makes it easier for the students to handle them during the presentation. One folder is created for each character. The folder contains the entire script with the lines of the individual character highlighted with a neon marker. The highlighting assists the students in following the dialogue. Two copies of each script should be made so that students have the opportunity to take one home for individual study and rehearsal. Adaptations of this process for younger students might involve attaching scripts to the back of puppet figures or simple props used in the presentation. Scripts used with emergent readers should be limited in length to no more than one page of text.

- ***Organizing for Presentation*** - The class is introduced to the presentation skills through a whole class participation exercise. For the purpose of skill building, students practice reading parts with a simple poem or rhyme. The text is color coded to designate parts. Students are divided into two groups and practice reading the poem/rhyme, reciting only those lines which are color coded the same as their designated group color. See Figure 2 for an example of a coded poem.

One Misty, Moisty Morning

Highlighted for girls' part:

Girls: One misty, moisty morning,

Boys: When cloudy was the weather,

Girls: I chanced to meet an old man,

Boys: Clothed all in leather.

Girls: He began to compliment

Boys: And I began to grin,

Girls: How do you do?

Boys: And how do you do?

ALL: And how do you do again?

Anonymous

Figure 2. Example of highlighted script.

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Through appropriate teacher modeling, students are encouraged to engage in expressive reading. After a few repetitions, the students will develop the skills necessary to successfully participate in readers theatre presentations. Roles are preassigned based on the needs of individual students and scripts are distributed accordingly.

Daily practice times are a necessary part of the success of readers theatre presentations. Students need to be given time on a regular basis to read, reread, and discuss their presentations. Additional time may be given for the production of minimal props, costumes, etc. if these are to be included in the presentation. (to be included, or not to be included... that is the question...)

- ***The Presentation*** - Students may stand or sit in the presentation area, carrying scripts in hand. The actual style of presentation may be relatively free-flowing or may be carefully orchestrated. A more free-flowing presentation might resemble an expressive extemporaneous reading in a small group. The more carefully orchestrated reading would provide the students with specific instructions on movement, positioning, or style of presentation. If sitting, characters may stand for their readings and sit when not reading. If standing, they may step forward for readings and then return to their original position when not reading. The narrator(s) are usually located on the extremities of the group and offer amplification of the story to the character readings.

Students who are not participating in the actual presentation are participating as audience members. They must be instructed on the roles and expectations of being good active listeners. This is where we prepare students to develop an understanding of the important role that an audience plays in a presentation along with appropriate etiquette and behavior expectations. It is also important to introduce a **real** audience to the presentation. Be sure to invite administrators, parents, and other classes to view the group's work. The anticipation of presenting to a **real** audience increases the importance of practice readings to the students, elevating them to the level of rehearsals for public performance. Students take a great deal of pride in their efforts and should be allowed to share their accomplishments with a broader audience.

- ***Post Presentation Discussion and Activities*** - Following the presentation, students discuss their experiences. The discussion should focus on such areas as:
  - the meaning of the text in relation to the role of the characters,
  - new vocabulary,
  - scripts, props, and costumes, which are gathered together and placed in a **literacy center**. Here, students can continue repeated readings and reenactments, exchanging roles and obtaining new understandings and insights while increasing fluency and comprehension.

Conclusion

As evidenced in the examples given above, students from a variety of diverse backgrounds and age levels can be given the opportunity to experience repeated readings of text, exploration of characterization and expression, discovery and illumination of new vocabulary, and event sequencing through readers theatre presentations and script writing.

Readers theatre has been shown to support students' reading fluency and comprehension through multiple opportunities for rereading familiar text with expression and proper phrasing (Martinez, Roser, & Strecker, 1999). Rereading is a powerful tool for improvement of readers' reading rate, accuracy, comprehension, and phrasing (Dowhower, 1987).

Although readers theatre has been recognized as an effective approach for older readers, traditionally it has not been used with emergent readers. Involving emergent readers in the retelling of favorite stories and creating a readers theatre script interactively presents many opportunities for literacy development, however. By involving the students in oral retelling of the stories being read, the teacher prepares them to write their versions of the stories, create a script-form of the retelling, and see the connection between oral and written language. Using a language experience or shared writing approach provides opportunities for the students to view the sounds they hear in words being converted to symbols (letters). The rereading of the scrip that naturally takes place during the shared writing helps the students to develop an expanded sight word vocabulary, hear expressive models of fluent reading and phrasing and experience the thrill of hearing their writing presented in an oral format.

The combination of story retelling, group writing, and rereading provides a strong literacy model for young readers. As emergent readers recreate their literary experiences, they form visual images of the vocabulary, situations, and sequences of action which enhance their knowledge base and prepare them to understand more complex materials (Busching, 1981).

The most exciting part of this approach is the simplicity of it. Writing scripts becomes a natural celebration of good books. The scripts, once written, can be presented in many forms. The students can make puppets to represent the characters, or simply read the scripts in small groups, changing roles with each rereading. Scripts, puppets, and basic props can be placed in a literacy center for further exploration and added reading practice. The students are motivated to read the scripts they have written and seen presented. They often choose to reread scripts many times, improving their reading skills and comprehension with each reading.

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Storytelling, The Cornerstone of Literacy

Debra Weller

The historical time line of storytelling, a description of the qualities of a good storyteller, and the reasons for using storytelling in the classroom are discussed, citing educational research to validate storytelling in the curriculum. Storytelling is presented as a way to foster language development, to increase listening and comprehension skills, and to strengthen retention of factual information. Information is provided for the classroom teacher to discover storytelling talents and to set up a storytelling community within the classroom. Activities are presented to encourage the teacher to guide children to become storytellers. Extension and cross curricular applications are delineated. The structure of an after school storytelling club is described.

Once upon a time a five year old girl was banished to her room because of naughty behavior. Instead of weeping and moaning, she turned off the lights and let the sunlight filter through the blinds. Carefully she slid the miniature china tea set from the shelf. At once she became a storyteller and invited her dolls and stuffed animals to join in the tale. The little girl continued her storytelling for many years until she chose to become a professional storyteller. The storyteller became a teacher of young children. Thus she was transformed into a "Storyteller, Storyteacher." (Gillard, 1996)

A Brief History of Storytelling

In ancient times as humans discovered and refined their oral language, stories emerged as a form of communication. Stories became the first source of formal education. People found they could explain natural phenomena, relate daily tasks, remember deeds of ancestors and magnify their deity through story. Each time the human family traveled in quest for new farming or grazing lands, they left some artifacts to explain their culture. However, they brought the oral tradition of story with them, revising and passing their stories to each generation. As people became mobile through land or sea travel, stories traveled, too. The Age of Exploration gave stories a chance to be exchanged from culture to culture. In many cultures storytellers were of noble calling.

This is a time line that shows the evidence of storytelling:

1250 b.c. "The Tale of Two Brothers"- Egyptian papyrus, oldest written version of a story.

500 b.c. "Kaushitaki Brahmana Upanishad"- Sanskrit scripture, storytelling was practiced for religious or secular reasons.

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400 b.c. Greek writing- Euripides, Aristophanes, Aesop, Plato, and Aristotle reference storytelling and educating children through story.

300 b.c. "Tao-te-Ching"- Taosism contains short tales and parables used to reinforce beliefs

200 b.c. "Grihya-Sutras, or Rules of Vedic Domestic Ceremonies"- Hindu rules for appropriate times for telling tales.

100 a.d. "Geography"- Strabo, a historian for the Roman Empire comments about storytelling as a bait for imparting wisdom to children.

400 a.d. "Panchatantra"- stories compiled for the education and enlightenment of the royal children of India. (Pellowski, 1977, p.4)

Evidence of storytelling exists in Judaism, Islam, Mayan, Arabic, Asian, Russian, Native American, and African cultures. After the fall of the Roman Empire, soldiers, conquerors, and colonizers aided the spread of multicultural tales. Nomadic gypsies delighted kings and peasants with stories as they traveled the European continent. With the crusades, stories continued to be traded as well as spices and goods.

In the Cymric school of bards in Wales and the Gaelic School of ollamhs, (master storytellers), in Ireland at the beginning of the 13th century, storytelling began to be professionalized. From the Celtic schools the art of story gained a formal structure for training and performance. Students were trained to remember popular stories and to create spontaneous stories. When Wales and Ireland were under conquest by England, the famous storytelling schools were disbanded. Bards and storytellers traveled to make a living of telling tales from one village to another. This required them to have a varied repertoire to sustain their livelihood (Pellowski, 1977).

Many stories had been recorded prior to the 15th century. The procedures were done by hand or through a time consuming carving and printmaking process. The moveable-type printing was invented around 1440 by Gutenberg. Gutenberg's press did not destroy the oral tradition; it made print available to the literate and enabled stories to be recorded for future storytellers. As books began to proliferate, storytellers' popularity declined. Printed literary tales came into being and now the oral tales could be preserved. With the discovery and colonization of the Americas, stories could be transported orally and in printed form, creating a great cultural and historical exchange. In 1812, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm published *Kinder-und* and *Hausmarchen*, a collection of Germanic folklore. This ignited the study and perpetuation of folklore. Oral narration as a form of entertainment for adults became less popular in the 18th century; however, it was still considered appropriate for children. The Brothers Grimm revived its popularity. Storytelling became fashionable once again.

In the United States the National Story League was founded in 1903. Marie Shedlock, Mabel C. Bragg, and Richard T. Wyche founded the organization. At first classes were held at a church summer school. Librarians, teachers, recreation and religious educators were trained in storytelling courses. Its original purposes were as noted by Pellowski (1977):

> To encourage the art of storytelling and the use of classic folklore stories in the schools and other educational centers; to foster creative work in the arranging and re-writing of stories of various classic and historic sources, to serve as a medium of exchange of stories and experiences in the use of story; to discover in the world's literature, in history, and in life's best stories for education, and to tell them with love and sympathy for the children, and to bring together in story circles those who love to hear and tell a good story. (p.169)

Storytelling was established throughout public libraries in the United States in the early 1900's. The Carnegie Library in Pittsburgh and the Pratt Institute Free Library in Brooklyn became training grounds for children's libraries. A Norwegian immigrant, Gudrun Thorne- Thomsen, became a teacher at the University of Chicago. Soon she gave storytelling demonstrations and lectures in library training schools, and her quiet style was imitated by the students. Pellowsi (1977) points out by 1927 there were regular storytelling programs in 79% of the public libraries in the United States. Popular storytelling programs spread to parks, recreation departments, campgrounds, hospitals and other institutions. Story hour programs are still prevalent in present day library programs.

Public schools were not as quick as the library systems in establishing storytelling as a necessary part of the curriculum. Friedrich Froebel, Maria Montessori, John Dewey, and Johann Friedrich Hebart supported storytelling in the early childhood classrooms. Librarians took the lead in incorporating storytelling into regular programs. In 1876 Felix Adler founded a group, "The Ethical Culture Society," which promoted the importance of storytelling. In the early 1900's a kindergarten teachers' group of the National Education Association included storytelling in the kindergarten training schools. Alvey (1977) notes that "kindergarten teachers were among the first to write extensively about storytelling to class groups of children" (p. 86). Alvey concluded about the writing: "One could nearly summarize kindergarten teachers' claims for the benefits of storytelling...by stating that they suggested that almost every conceivable benefit of desirable non-physical need of the child could be realized through properly employed storytelling" (p.87). Presently schools do hire professional storytellers as assembly entertainers or as an artist in residence. However, a storytelling course is not required of the course work for educators.

In 1973, Jonesborough, Tennessee hosted the first National Storytelling Festival. Jimmy Neil Smith, a former journalism teacher and mayor of Jonesborough, was inspired by listening to a radio show featuring Grand Old Opry star Jerry Clover telling a hunting story. He thought people should come to listen to stories at a festival. This National Storytelling Festival, the only one of its kind in any nation of the world, began a renaissance in storytelling. Two years after the first festival, the National Storytelling Association was founded. Its mission was to preserve and perpetuate the art of the oral tradition of storytelling. Storytellers throughout the United States joined the

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organization and organized local storytelling guilds in communities. The organization is now known as the National Storytelling Network. Members receive *Storytelling Magazine*, discounts to the annual festival and a July conference, The National Storytelling Directory, and storytelling resources. The NSN website — www.storynet.org — provides information for all storytelling topics. National Storytelling Week has been declared by Congress as the third week of November, which also happens to be Children's Book Week. The week culminates with Tellabration, the World Wide Night of Story in which storytelling events occur in every time zone around the world at 8:00 p.m. From ancient times to the present, storytelling emerges from the dust and takes precedence as an educational and communication art form.

What Makes a Good Storyteller?

With storytelling in a renaissance, many storytellers have come forth to encourage, demonstrate and entertain with the art of the oral tradition. Each storyteller has a unique style. There is no one right way to tell a story. Kendall Haven, (1997), an educator and professional storyteller, provides this definition: "Storytelling is the art of using language, vocalization, and/or physical movement and gesture to reveal the elements and images of a story to a specific, live audience" (p.2). Unlike theater's "fourth wall," storytelling is a direct interaction between teller and audience. In fact, the interaction guides the storyteller to play with the key elements of story, eye contact, gestures, pacing, and vocal inflection to adjust the story to please the audience. The storyteller, using the voice as an instrument and the words as imagery, commands the live audience to participate through an imaginative journey. As the teller speaks, the listener creates a living video screen inside his or her brain based upon prior knowledge and experiences. The storyteller and the listener mesh in the process of creating the story together. A good storyteller includes spontaneous and improvisational techniques to enhance the story. A story is never told exactly the same way, as the teller is always inventing the tale anew. The storyteller's art is to bring forth a story which touches the emotional, intellectual, and spiritual realms of the listener.

Storytellers present their art live in a person to person exchange. While there are storytelling videos available, they do not replace the essential oral tradition art form. The videos are best used for demonstrations of various storytelling techniques and for comparisons of styles. The storyteller has the task of performing story to evoke empathy, compassion, and laughter by connecting directly with each individual in the audience. Facial expressions provide visual cues. Vocal sound effects tease the audience's senses. Kinesthetic body movements strengthen visual imagery. Voice intonations give birth to vibrant characters. A good storyteller knows how to choose stories for a program and has a variety of stories in his or her repertoire to accommodate the varied ages in an audience.

When storytelling to audiences under eight years of age, a storyteller may choose to add puppets, props, scarves, paper cutouts, flannel board figures, or string figures to enhance understanding of vocabulary and sequence. Yet the story must remain the

primary focus. Musical instruments add a balanced flow and rhythm to a story, but are not a necessary component. Storytellers further the audience participation when they invite the listeners to join in with a chant, song, sound effect, or action. The purest form of the oral tradition requires a trust that the storyteller can weave the magic of words just by using the voice.

Storytellers carefully choose stories. There are many genres of stories from which to choose: fables, myths, tall tales, literary tales, humor, and accumulation tales. A good storyteller reads and listens to stories to discover a tale that appeals to his or her emotions and personality. The storyteller is a keen observer of life, knowing a story may be hidden in the most common places of the heart. After choosing a story, the storyteller reads and envisions the tale. The first telling is just a basic recall of events to establish the story structure. From there the teller plays with the story, polishing the characters, committing first and last lines to memory but never memorizing the whole story. Characters are resurrected from the printed page and molded with voice and body movements. The storyteller learns to trust his or her own language. Stories are not polished until they have been told before a live audience at least five times. The first 30 seconds of telling are the most important, as the audience must be captured and held captive for the length of the performance. Perfectly timed pauses give the audience a chance to reflect and process the story. A good storyteller respects the audience and is humbled by the power of story.

Why tell stories?

We are by tradition, storytellers. Humans were given voice and reason to distinguish us from other animals. Infants practice using voice through cries, grunts, and coos. Babbling precedes words. Separate sounds blend into words, followed by phrases and sentences. By ages two or three, a child has become an oral communicator. Eventually children polish their language skills into a story format. As children listen to a story being told in the oral tradition, they are introduced to various forms of syntax, diction and rhetoric. Children can be guided through storytelling experiences to recognize patterns in language, to play and manipulate language, and to increase linguistic stimulation for the acquisition of phonemic awareness. Storytelling is the cornerstone for literacy.

Barton and Booth (1990), authors of *Stories in the Classroom*, have discovered: "Story is a living context for making meaning. It can reinforce the imaginative framework of the developing child, give validity to important feelings, promote insights, nourish hope, reduce anxieties, and provide a rich fantasy life" (p.14). We tell stories to share details of our lives.

Personal experiences weave an intricate pattern of oral history. Gossip, tall tales, legends, myths and folklore all began with a storyteller. Each child in the classroom is a storyteller. When educators create a story community within the classroom, story becomes the heart of the curriculum.

In the book, *The Boy Who Would be Helicopter*, Paley (1990) demonstrates the varied uses of storytelling in the classroom. Through recording the stories of her students, she has documented the importance of story play for children. She indicates that her philosophy of teaching changed because of her

observations and that, "A day without storytelling is, for me, a disconnected day" (p.20). Paley (1990) continues to extol the value of storytelling, stating: "Play and its necessary core of storytelling are the primary realities in the preschool and kindergarten, and they will be the prototypes for imaginative endeavors throughout our lives" (p. 22).

For the past twelve years, I have been a kindergarten teacher who honors storytelling as the strongest literacy component in the curriculum. As each year begins, the children are introduced to storytelling on the first day of school. By mid year the students tell me, "Just put down the book and tell us a story!" It is a delightful command to which I fully comply. The greatest compliment is when the children ask to be designated as the *Storyteller for Day*.

When I tell a story, I see 33 sets of eyes focused on me. Initially, there may be a wiggling child, but within the first seconds of the story the extraneous movements subside. The children become fully engaged in the process of story. They have entered a secret garden of words, embellished with eye contact, gestures, and movements. Characters take on a vivid personification. The power of story envelopes the children. They smile or frown according to the whims of the story. When I finish the story, the children sit motionless, transported through imagination. Many respond by asking, "Is that true? Did it really happen?" I never directly answer the questions because I want the children to continue to use their imagination and reflect on the meaning of the story. I may return their inquiry by questioning, "Is it real or pretend?" I often hear phrases from the stories repeated during recess and dramatic play. Story is a brief repose in the noisy world of children.

Children are bombarded with noise every waking hour. The television, videos, computer games, and other electronic gadgets flash images created by adults. They cannot escape the videos as screens are prevalent in restaurants, doctor's offices, stores and other public places. Their brains are overloaded with this extraneous and sometimes meaningless stimuli. Farrell (1992), founder of Word Weaving, Inc., states, "Many students have lost their skill for visual thought. As youngsters listen to stories told directly to them, they are visualizing, identifying, and comprehending literacy language" (p.12). Storytelling provides a safe haven and "confronts the child squarely with the basic human predicaments" (Bettleheim, 1975, p. 8). When a child is immersed in story, the story is not merely a form of entertainment, but a stimulant to the emotions, intellect and imagination. If story is so powerful, is it possible to measure its effect on learning?

Supporting Research

At present specific clinical research on storytelling is sparse. However, brain research is indicating that story and story pattern are effective ways the brain organizes information. Hermann (1991), a specialist in memory enhancement, points out: "Research shows that organized information can be learned four times faster than information that is presented randomly" (p. 18). Recall a favorite professor, minister, or public speaker. Were these people excellent storytellers? You may still be able to remember the lesson or message because you received it through story. Smith (1988) notes:

> The human brain is essentially a narrative device. It runs on stories. The knowledge that we store in the brain, our "theory of the world" is largely in the form of stories. Stories are far more easily remembered and recalled than sequences of unrelated facts. (p. 178)

Supporting research is found in the work of psychologist Renee Fuller. Her study involved working with severely brain-damaged children. She desired to discover if these children, who had only a slight grasp of language, could succeed in basic reading comprehension. Her vehicle for testing was the use of simple stories instead of series of disjointed facts. She hypothesized that a "story engram" (Stallings, 1984, p. 9) may be built into the human brain. The children were able to show gains in a basic form of reading comprehension because they were exposed to the telling of stories. Stallings points out in relation to Fuller's finding: "That the children could understand story implies story comprehension is so basic that it survives severe neurological damage" (p.9). The brain is naturally wired to accept and thrive on story.

Implications for Literacy

As noted earlier, the preliterate child exists in a world of playing with oral language. As infants discover their voice, they babble and gurgle to gain attention of caregivers. In the second year of life, children experiment with language and vocabulary increases in a whirlwind of playful word practice. Language becomes a way to communicate needs. From three years through five years, the children perfect language and use imaginative ways to connect words to express thoughts. Stories become prevalent especially in conversations and dramatic play. As children are given more exposure to literature thorough reading, the personal stories become more structured and new vocabulary is practiced.

Gardner (1991) uses the term "scripts" to describe how children ages two to three years old are able to sequence events. He states: "This is the entry point to storytelling and story understanding....It is universal to construe meaning and one way students could be expected to learn materials if predisposed with event structures" (p.67). Finding meaning from words and story understanding is the foundation for reading comprehension. When literacy is emerging in a young child, pictures are relied upon heavily to derive meaning Preliterate children construct meaning by "reading" stories and retelling from illustrations. As children "regularly hear stories, subconsciously, they acquire familiarity with narrative patterns and to begin to predict upcoming events" (National Council of Teachers of English, p.1). Storytelling provides children with a chance to develop listening comprehension skills. Well developed listening is essential to reading comprehension. Children who are fully engaged in a story form of learning "combined with judicious questioning and retelling strategies, comprehension skills at literal, inferential, and critical levels can be developed" (Dwyer, 1988).

Morrow (1985) conducted research about the value of retelling stories in relation to improved comprehension. The kindergarten children in the experimental group were asked to retell

a story which had been read to them. The control group was asked to draw a picture about the story. The experimental group had higher scores in comprehension than the control group. In the second study the experimental group was read eight stories and asked to retell each of the stories. The control group was asked to draw eight pictures, one for each story. The control group showed a gain of 9.3% in the comprehension scores and the experimental group showed a gain of 27.6%. Morrow concludes: "The study offers empirical data and anecdotal support for the educational value of retelling. When so many skills are improved through its use, storytelling cannot be thought of as a frill" (p. 659).

In order to create a reader, according to Marchisio (1986), both reading skills and reading motivation have to be developed. She thinks storytelling is a way to stimulate the motivation. When she discovered there was little research to back up her theory, she developed a research based project, "Movement Assisted Storytelling as a Vehicle to Motivate Reading in Grades One through Four." She worked with 190 children in grades one through four at three different schools in eight different classrooms. A storytelling session was presented in each classroom once a week for five weeks. Each session was an hour in length. In the hour visit she told a story and had the children participate in a movement or drama activity related to the story. A new book was introduced each week, and it remained in the classroom. The fifth session was the turning point as children asked, "Where do I get books like that?" As the exposure to storytelling increased, the desire to read books increased proportionately. Marchisio evaluated the project in several ways: (1) teacher verbal comments, (2) student verbal comments, (3) researcher's observations, and (4) written evaluation forms. Teachers reported an increase in choosing reading for a free time activity. The children created skits and puppet shows about the stories. New vocabulary was appearing in writing activities. Five out of the eight classrooms had an increase in interest in reading. Three weeks after the storytelling sessions were over several teachers reported to Marchisio that students wanted to find more stories like the storyteller told.

Multicultural folk tales, fairy tales and myths are written with an abundant richness of vocabulary and complexities of language. When children are exposed to the tales, they are wrapped with the storyteller's gift of dramatizing and exaggerating the written word. The storyteller has the unique task of painting clear visual images with words and voice inflection. Words take on a new contextual meaning but the listener's emotions and folk tales laced with delicious, repetitive phrases or chants invite participation. Children naturally chime in with the storyteller to repeat "Cats here, cats there, cats and kittens everywhere. Hundreds of cats, thousands of cats, millions and billions and trillions of cats" (Gag, 1928). By introducing children to these marvelous examples of literature, they begin to practice language that is not a part of their daily speech patterns. Thus vocabulary is expanded. Chalmers (1973) points out:

> As children listen to stories, verse, prose of any kind, they unconsciously become familiar with the rhythms, the structures,

the cadences, and the conventions of the various forms of written language. They are learning how print "sounds," how to "hear" in the inner ear. (p.181)

Storytelling Throughout the Curriculum

Egan (1979) advocates using story form to teach all subjects to all young students. The brain research cited earlier confirms that story is one effective way in which the brain organizes information. Early childhood teachers can rely upon storytelling to instantly transform science, social studies, and math concepts into child-centered curriculum. As Stallings (1988) notes: "Master teachers who use stories help students to absorb, understand, and remember effortlessly" (p. 9).

Social Science lends itself easily to story. The teacher can weave facts into story while trying to explain the passage of time. As Egan (1986) points out: " The content of social studies involves events, values, places, intentions, individual people and groups....the content of social studies already comes story shaped" (p.65). Cultures can be honored through the telling of folktales. African and Native American folktales are embedded with descriptions of family life, village rules, traditions, and explanations of natural phenomena. It is far more interesting to the learner if the facts are within a story. Critical thinking skills are challenged when children have to discern the truth in a folktale versus reading a text description. When children retell and dramatize the historical events, they will remember the facts better than rote memorization. Thus, social science will become viable to the imagination.

A science specialist visited my kindergarten classroom to teach about astronomy. The young man ingeniously told myths and creation tales about stars. After the stories were told, the children created a paper constellation. They were divided into teams and had the task of dictating a story to identify the team creation. This activity was the highlight of the week, and the children continued to use the science specific vocabulary throughout the year.

The water cycle can be easily explained by making up a story about a lonely droplet of water. Invite children to act out the forming of a cloud through evaporation and condensation. Later they further their understanding by writing in science journals and drawing diagrams of the water cycle.

Science concepts are more palatable when told in story. Carle and Lionni are master science storytellers. The books by these two authors give simple explanations for science concepts. The stories have the elements of surprise endings, repetitive phrases, and predictability. *Swimmy* (Lionni, 1963), describes how fish travel in schools. *A Color of His Own* (Lionni, 1969) is perfect for a discussion of camouflage. *The Tiny Seed* (Carle, 1987) explains how seeds travel and implant themselves and the life cycle of a plant. Any of these stories would be great starting points for expository storytelling and dramatic play.

Math does not need extensive explanations when the content is delivered in partnership with story. Counting stories are abundant on library shelves. Children enjoy making up their own counting stories, especially when classmates names are interjected in the story. When chant and song are added to the story, the counting is an enthralling

game. Of course young children require concrete activities, in addition to the story form. By adding manipulative materials to the story, there is a completion of learning modalities. Counting riddles help challenge children to respond with more than one solution to a problem. Story problems can be personalized by using students' names or community locations. Children can be directed to develop their own word problems, to tell them as stories, and to write the stories in math journals.

Fox (1993) champions the virtue of storytelling as a basis for writing development. She argues that:

> Children are expected to write narratives before they have had a chance to develop the story both orally and mentally. When storytelling is a part of the language curriculum, children develop an understanding of story structure and organization which can form a framework for their own stories. (p.16)

As children comprehend the meaning of a story, they can be guided to identify the basic structure of the story. Visual mapping and story boards can assist children in identifying the beginning, middle and end of the story. They need valuable oral retelling opportunities to increase the ability to organize the story structure before being required to write a story. Fox says: "I weave a million little teaching points in and out of my stories to nurture accidental literacy and to exterminate the need for any nasty, extrinsic, worksheet activities that some educational demolitionist might dream up" (p.123).

Moral education proliferates through storytelling. Fables and fairy-tales teach through metaphor. Our children are growing up void of images of heroes. Sports figures are elevated to heroes, but they are only substitutes for the heroes of folklore. The never ending themes roll on: good versus evil, choices and consequences, death defying acts and life enhancing affairs. When children are introduced to the folklore heroes, "they can be attuned to their anxieties and aspirations, give full recognition to difficulties, and be open to suggestions of solutions to problems" (Bettleheim, p.11). Children develop empathy for characters as their hearts and minds are engaged. "Story is one of the most serious intruders of the heart" (Yolen, 1981, p.26).

Gurian (1996) has done extensive studies on the moral development of boys and reports his findings and theories in *The Wonder of Boys*. He states:

> All children need stories, yet there is a way in which I think boys are desperate for them. Boys, as they get older, feel less and less able to compete in the emotional arena. Boys need stories and archetypes to give them an internal, reflective language for their feeling experiences. Preaching at a boy to "change" rarely changes him. Showing him, in story, how to transform himself works much better. (pp. 206-207)

From story children gain insight about themselves and others. As Smith (1986) notes: "Storytelling can maintain and deepen feeling for the suffering of others" (Smith, p.47).

Relating Storytelling to the California Reading and Language Arts Standards

While the benefits of storytelling are evident, it may be necessary to justify its presence in the classroom to an administrator. These standards are from *The Reading and Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools: Kindergarten through Grade Twelve*. (California Dept. of Education, 1999):

2.0 Reading Comprehension
2.4 Retell familiar stories.
3.0 Literary Response and Analysis
3.3 Identify characters, settings, and important events.
2.0 Speaking Applications
2.1 Describe people, places, things, locations and actions.
2.2 Recite short poems, rhymes and songs.
2.3 Relate an experience or creative story in logical sequence.

Grade One:
2.0 Speaking Applications
2.1 Recite poems, rhymes, songs, stories.
2.2 Retell stories using basic story grammar, sequencing story events by answering who, what, when, where, why, and how questions.
2.3 Relate an important life event or personal experience, using simple sequencing.
2.4 Provide descriptions with careful attention to sensory detail.

How can the standards be addressed through storytelling? One of the reading comprehension standards is Standard 2.4-Retell familiar stories. Polakowski (1995) states:

> Retelling is a procedure by which a child reconstructs the important elements of a story. This can be done orally, pictorially or in writing. The purpose of retelling is to determine the reader's ability to comprehend text and stories, sense of story structure and language complexity. (p.63)

The story selected for retelling should have an easy to follow plot and storylines. Repetition stories are an excellent choice. For the purpose of this article, *The Gingerbread Boy* will be used as an example. The teacher begins by reading or telling the story to the whole class. The story should be on a listening tape for small group or individual follow-up activity. The children are instructed to listen carefully to the story so that they can be storytellers and tell the story later. At the first reading the teacher does not discuss the story. The children are given the task to pair up with another child and take turns retelling the story. The teacher circulates, taking anecdotal records and observing comprehension and vocabulary. When the telling is complete, the children are directed to return to their desk and draw a sequential picture about the story.

Literary Response and Analysis, Standard 3.0, requires that the children identify characters, setting, and important events. Continuing with the example of *The Gingerbread Boy*, the teacher reads or tells the story again on the second day. The children identify the characters, setting and events by collectively constructing a story map or other graphic organizer. The teacher adds drawings to delineate characters and adds visual clues. The children are invited to tell their stories again to their

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partner with an emphasis on characterization.

To further the literary response and analysis, the teacher may refer to *Bloom's Taxonomy* (1956). At the knowledge level, the children respond to questions about events of the story and draw a response. For the comprehension level the children need to identify and explain the problem of the story. They could brainstorm adjectives to describe the feelings of the old man, woman, or the animals. The application level could be introduced by having the children act out the story using masks and props. For analysis the teacher draws a Venn-Diagram and the children contribute by comparing and contrasting a real boy versus the gingerbread boy. The children could create a song or poem about the story thus functioning at the synthesis level. Evaluation would be imbedded in an additional retelling in which the children tell the story from the point of view of the fox.

The Speaking Application standards for Kindergarten and Grade One lend themselves to both narrative and expository storytelling. Personal narrative storytelling involves an autobiographical account of a specific occurrence in the storyteller's life. A biographical narrative explores the characterization of a person, including incidents, background information, thoughts and emotions. Fiction and fantasy narratives are told in the third person. The main character changes or solves a problem. In the fable narratives, the storyteller relates an event, problem and situation, how the character reacts, the results, and the lesson taught. To assist young children in the understanding these concepts, a teacher needs to model and identify the different forms of narrative storytelling. The teacher can assign the children the oral task of creating the narrative in either genre and further the literacy circle by adding a drawing or writing activity. To return to the speaking applications, the teacher gives the children a chance to relate important life events and personal experiences through storytelling.

Expository storytelling explains concepts and presents facts and information. Sensory details are built into the story accounting. A sequential storytelling presents steps or events in order. For example, the teacher may present the topic, "How to make a peanut butter sandwich." The students would be given thinking time to construct the mental sequence. Then they tell the story to a small group. Informational storytelling could be a news report, summary of a story, or a research report. Basically, the facts are given in response to answering *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why*, and *how*. The elements of story are used to make the report more interesting to the listener. Exploratory storytelling focuses on answering *how* or *why*. Ancient cultures explained many natural occurrences through *pour quois* stories. For instance, the teacher might pose the question, how are rainbows formed? The students may study about rainbows to learn the facts and then create the expository story by using the facts.

The speaking applications of storytelling are an empowering tool to assist children in developing excellent communication skills. Oral communication skills are lauded as a requirement for success in the business world. By giving students a chance to overcome their public speaking fears at an early age, they will acquire a lifetime skill.

Storytelling can be a fun vehicle to attain the standard requirements. It can begin when a storytelling community is established within the classroom.

Creating a Classroom Story Community

Storytelling should be introduced as an honored component of the classroom just as it is revered in the Native American and African cultures. Discussing the storytelling cultures, Rosen (1988) says: "The impulse to story is present in every child; a storytelling culture in the classroom refines and enlarges upon that impulse" (p.2). Create a mystique so that the children realize storytelling is a special entity. Set aside a special place for stories to be told, a designated chair, stool or area. Choose one of the following ideas to implement as a ritual transition: dimming the lights, turning on a small lamp, spreading a quilt on the floor, hanging a banner, ringing chimes, playing a specific instrument, or listening to a musical selection. Informal storytelling will occur throughout the day as the children have conversations and dramatic play, but the magic begins when the ritual is fulfilled within traditions. Respect for the storyteller is demanded and modeled by the teacher. The children may need to physically prepare themselves by putting on story manners: a quiet still body, legs and arms folded, a silent voice, and eye contact. Two premises make up the cardinal rules:

- When a story is being told, only the storyteller speaks, everyone else is a listener.
- There is no one correct way to tell a story. Each teller is respected for his or her own style.

A teacher will be surprised by the enchantment cast by the spell of the story as the book is put aside and the voice of the storyteller beckons the children to join the journey. "Children become noticeably more attentive, relaxed, and yet highly focused" (Nessel, 1985, p. 378).

Teacher as Storyteller

Holladay (1987) points out: "Teachers who use story are more effective than those who do not" (p. 3). A distinction needs to be made between a Professional Storyteller and the "Storyteller, Storyteacher" (Gillard, 1996). A professional storyteller may be hired for a visitation to a school. When the day is over the professional storyteller is off to the next engagement. A storytelling teacher, however, has a daily responsibility to weave intricate webs of story within the curriculum so that it is understood by all levels of students. Her story is never ending and continually unfolding. The teacher should not deny herself the opportunity to be a storyteller because she may not feel as polished as the professional storyteller. Remember no two storytellers tell a tale in exactly the same way.

Our classrooms and school libraries already have the materials we need to learn stories. The beginning storyteller should start with familiar tales like *The Little Red Hen*, *The Gingerbread Boy*, *The Three Bears*, *Aesop's Fables*, and *Arnold Lobel's Fables*. Chances are these stories are already in the memory banks. Children will not mind if a teacher uses note cards or other prompts to remember a story. A storyteller does not memorize a story word for word. The beginning sentences may be memorized as a compass point.

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Chants and repetitive phrases will benefit from memorization. The art of storytelling, in its bare bones form, is a basic, retell, comprehension format – beginning, middle and end.

One of the responsibilities the teacher must display is modeling storytelling with effective eye contact, voice inflection, characterization and gestures. It is not necessary to expect to be a master at once. Practice in the classroom and add a technique in each retelling of the story. Children will appreciate hearing the same story told more than once. The teacher can avoid hearing "You already told us that story" by prefacing a retelling with, "I need your help. I know I told you this story last week. I am trying to get better at using gestures. After the story I want you to tell me what you noticed." With very young children and English language learners, it may be necessary to use props and visuals to assist the children with comprehension and vocabulary development. Use cartooning, flannel board, puppets, story boards and drawings as necessary to increase understanding.

Doyle (2000), a professional storyteller and Professor Emeritus of Arizona State, cautions the teacher that "storytelling should not be presented in an anything manner. It should be the best we have to offer" (p.23). When teaching storytelling to children, the teacher also needs to be a coach who guides them through the journey of selection of meaningful material and quality performance. The teacher has the responsibility to introduce the coaching model which includes affirmations and suggestions. Along with modeling storytelling, a teacher works on her storytelling skills as she simultaneously coaches her student tellers. Estes (1993) writes in *The Gift of Story*, "There is no right or wrong way to tell a story. Perhaps you will forget the beginning, middle or the end. But a little piece of sunrise through a small window can lift a heart. ...I promise it will be enough" (p.29). The following steps are recommended for beginning storytellers:

1. Choose a short story (3-5 paragraphs) that you really enjoy reading or one that has personal meaning. Fables produce instant success.
2. Read the story three times. By the third reading, try to visualize the story, characters, setting, and plot.
3. Remember the beginning, middle and end. Review the problem in the story and how it was solved.
4. Block the story on a blank piece of paper by drawing stick figures to represent the characters and sequence of the story. An outline will accomplish the same purpose. The main goal of the blocking is to move from relying on the text to remembering the story.
5. Commit the first and last two sentences to memory to keep the story focused. Additional phrases or dialog may need to be memorized.
6. Try to tell the story from the blocked drawing.
7. Retell the story in your own words as if you were an eyewitness to the action. Do not worry about forgetting a part of the story. Make up what you forget, but make sure it relates to the ending and plot.
8. Think about the characters: What do they look like? What kind of voices will they have? How will they move?
9. Now TELL, TELL, TELL, TELL, TELL. A story does not become polished until you tell it at least five

times. It will be programmed into your mind and heart.

10. Do not make excuses. Learn just one story, tell it five or more times, then take on the task of learning a new tale or writing your own stories.

Children as Storytellers

Children do not need encouragement to tell stories. It is their natural state of being. Some may be shy and need coaxing, but once they realize they can command an audience, they will want to tell more stories. "Children at any level of schooling who do not feel as competent as their peers in reading or writing are often masterful at storytelling" (National Council of Teachers of English, p. 2). Public speaking skills are sometimes delegated to the lower rungs in the classroom curriculum hierarchy. Yet the ability to speak before a group, which sends shivers up most adult spines, needs to be cultivated for future career success.

Introductory storytelling activities can begin on the first day of school. The following activities will start children on the path to later formal storytelling experiences. Children need time to develop their skills, and they need a chance to be successful with mini stories first. These beginning exercises build confidence. Children love to talk about themselves, so the personal story is the place to start. A story stick is a magical tool to encourage the establishing of a storytelling community. To make a story stick:

- Cut a 1/2" wooden dowel or tree branch into a twelve inch length.
- Decorate the dowel with ribbons, plastic beads, jewels and feathers at the top 3 inches of the stick.
- Introduce the children to the story stick by inviting them to join hands and sit in a circle. When the children are seated, hands are placed in laps. The rules for the story stick are explained by the teacher.
- The person holding the stick is the storyteller.
- Only the storyteller can speak and the rest of the students are listeners.
- The storyteller needs to use a voice that is loud enough for everyone in the circle to hear. No whispers. (The teacher models this.) When the storyteller is finished speaking, he or she may pass the stick to the next child.

For the first five training sessions, it is important for the teacher to model a storyteller's voice and short, simple, complete sentences. Children have a tendency to tell "and then" stories in which they ramble in chaotic phrases. Limiting the children to one or two sentences, avoids one child monopolizing the activity. Children also need time to gather their thoughts from the brain to the lips. At the beginning of the story stick passing, the teacher quietly counts to 20 and reminds the children to gather their thoughts and place them on their lips. The teacher may find this is an instant oral language assessment tool. Children benefit in the beginning by story starter topics to prevent rambling. It takes about 15-20 minutes for thirty children to pass the story stick. Here are some suggested story starters:

Narrative:

- favorite flavor of ice cream or pizza.
- after school activities
- pet antics
- family vacations
- holiday memories

- injuries
- happy memory/scary memory
- birthday celebrations

Expository:

- giving a dog a bath
- washing the family car
- learning how to swim
- making cookies
- growing a watermelon plant
- describing a playground

The story stick lessons can be expanded after two weeks of practice. It is suggested that children go to journal writing right after the story circle so they can further elaborate on a story. The story stick can be used in place of sharing time. Every Monday the children can share what happened during the weekend.

Conflict resolution skills can be learned through using the story stick. When there is a moral dilemma in the classroom, the children pass the story stick and speak about their emotions regarding the issue. Rules need to be established so that this becomes a learning experience with positive outcomes instead of name calling or tattle telling. The rules may include:

- Use "I" statements. For example, "I was angry when Jillian cut in front of me in the lunch line."
- Use "when" statements. For example, "When Derek keeps talking, it makes it hard for me to do my work."

The teacher summarizes feelings and involves the class in a conflict resolution by engaging the children in contributing suggestions for problem-solving. The ideas may be recorded or new rules developed.

Children enjoy retelling a shared reading story and the story stick can be used to enhance this activity. After a story has been read aloud as a shared class activity, the teacher may instruct the children to think about a new ending for the story, to give new qualities to a characters, or to reflect on how the characters solved the conflict in the story. The children gather in the story stick circle and each child contributes his or her idea. The class may also create a new story in round robin fashion with each child adding to the action or dialog. A tape recorder is helpful to document the spontaneous story.

Two other techniques that help develop children as storytellers are telling about a found object and using story cards. For homework children are asked to bring in one unwanted household item or toy that is no bigger than their hand. Kitchen utensils, tools, parts of machines, mismatched socks and mittens are nice additions. Each child speaks about the object with sensory detail, and then the objects are placed in a communal basket. During writing center the children are asked to select one object from the basket and to tell a story. The teacher should model a story to steer children from simple observational statements. After each child shares orally, the students are given paper and asked to draw or write about the story they just told. The basket is always available when students finish work early.

Story cards can be made by children or parent helpers. Purchase three packages of colored index cards, one for *places*, one for *things*, one for *people*. Put magazines, food ads and old calendars on the table with scissors and glue. The children find pictures to fit the category and glue it to the corresponding card color. The cards are laminated and

placed in plastic containers or baskets. Children are invited to select a card and tell a story about the picture. The teacher needs to model the distinction between telling a story and describing the objects in the picture. When mastery is achieved with one picture, another picture and another category can be selected. Writing is a natural extension. Keep the cards accessible to the children to encourage use of the cards during free time.

As students become more proficient in their storytelling from objects and pictures, they will be ready to tell a story from a book. Young children can easily retell from illustrations in picture books. A story may be introduced to the whole class on Monday during a shared reading time. The story is reread by the teacher on Tuesday. On Wednesday the children make story maps and story boards to delineate sequence. By Thursday the children are telling and revising the story. On Friday the teacher can give polishing pointers by working on voice inflections, characterization, and gestures. After several weeks of following this pattern, a class full of storytellers is born! Invite parents to a storytelling festival. In the fall the third week of November is National Storytelling Week and Children's Book Week, a perfect reason for a storytelling event. In April Turn Off the TV Week and The Week of the Young Child are two more celebrations during which children can tell stories at home and at school.

Storytelling Extensions

It is very important when teachers embrace storytelling as a vital element of the language arts curriculum that there is a balance between stories being told for the pure enjoyment of language and stories being told for an specific curriculum goal. Barton and Booth (1990) caution: "But we must be careful not to use story solely for our own teaching goals. Story is an art form unto itself, a worthwhile experience without teaching follow up. If we can enrich learning with story so much the better." (p.26) Here are some suggested extensions:

1. Use flannelboard characters to tell the tale.
2. Sequence the story with story charts, maps, and webs.
3. Make a large class story board to which the students contribute the drawings.
4. Have the children draw pictures about the story; write down their dictation.
5. Create multi-media art presentations with clay, paper collages or puppets.
6. Analyze the story looking for similarities, differences, and themes to make a Venn diagram.
7. Retell the story in a round robin fashion.
8. Have children role play the characters with mime, puppets, masks and costumes.
9. Place characters in new situations and retell a new version of the story.
10. Write new stories and tell them for an audience. Video or audio tape the teller.

Storytelling Clubs

Once the teacher has gained confidence in guiding her students to develop as storytellers, a school wide storytelling club could be a goal. For the past five years, I have run a storytelling club and constructed a curriculum. In October the 700 students in grades first through fifth receive an

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individual flyer inviting them to join the storytelling club. Kindergarten children are invited based upon literacy skills and teacher recommendation. I limit the enrollment to the first 30 students who return the form and keep a waiting list in case students have to drop out because of conflicting schedules. Returning club members from previous years have priority placement. The club meets after school on Thursdays from 2:45-3:30. Parents must sign a permission form to provide transportation for off-site events. I have designed a shirt with the title of our club printed in black ink, "Voices of the Future." The children wear the shirt to club meetings and performances. The average attendance has been 20 multiage students, a manageable group.

At the first meeting I model storytelling versus story reading. I begin to read a story and then put down the book and finish by telling the story. I ask the children to compare and contrast the two methods. Within the conversation, they identify story components, eye contact, movement, voice inflection, mime, characterization, and the engagement of imagination. I then discuss the role of a storyteller and the important responsibility a storyteller has to the audience. The story stick is used to begin to coax a storyteller's voice from the children.

From October through May each club session begins with a story told by the teacher or students. Each week I target a specific skill or technique and introduce it through a game. In the first six weeks, the children are guided to select a story from my story files or the library. They learn how to story board so they can make a transition from relying on print to oral language and not stumble with stale memorization. Their first telling of a story is in the basic retell comprehension mode. The students report they are just happy to get through the first telling to a partner. At each session the children practice telling their stories to a buddy, in a small group, and sometimes they even tell to the wall. I circulate and give suggestions and affirmations to the tellers so they can begin to improve and bring excitement into their storytelling. By the sixth session, the students are ready to tell their story in front of the whole group. They have been instructed about stage presence and how to capture the audience's attention. Their confidence has improved.

The most important part of the curriculum involves coaching. The main role of the teacher is to coach the students with affirmations and suggestions. The teacher models this for her students and teaches the rudiments. The power of coaching becomes more effective when students learn how to give affirmations and suggestions to their peers. Affirmations are compliments like, "I noticed you use a deep voice for the troll. It helped me to visualize the character better." Suggestions are positive criticism using "I statements." For example, "I was wondering if you added a gesture to show the character closing the door, if that part of the story would make more sense." When children start speaking to their peers in this manner, their critical thinking skills expand.

Club students are required to learn at least two stories. I provide a story box of photocopied fables and short stories. We frequently visit the library in the first few weeks to find stories. Children may bring in favorite stories from home libraries. Each week the

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children have a homework assignment related to a skill or technique. They are required to have a storytelling notebook in which they keep copies of stories and club information.

In order to maintain momentum throughout the year, I schedule a public performance every two months, otherwise the children are not as motivated to polish their stories. Performances include Bedtime Story Night, after school performances for parents, performing in other classrooms in the schools, bookstores, libraries, community festivals and organized storytelling events. During National Storytelling Week, we host Tellabration, the World Wide Night of Story. It is our first formal performance of the year. Professional storytellers visit the club so students learn a variety of styles. The classroom teachers of storytelling club students always compliment the splendid confidence and leadership skills the children display.

To watch a very shy child toss away fears and blossom in front of an audience is truly a metamorphosis. It is a gift to witness a diagnosed ADHD student discover he or she can be accepted by other students because storytelling is an appropriate outlet for his or her energy. There is a very strong bond established in a storytelling club. The students are transformed into honored storytellers as they embrace the art of story. Parents are amazed by the transformation.

Conclusion

The education pendulum swings to and fro, both stressing and empowering teachers. We cannot blindly accept curriculum changes without analyzing the effect upon the children we teach. Storytelling is an ancient teaching tool and communication skill brought to the forefront with current brain research. It is not just a magical frill, but a viable component of effective literacy programs. By first establishing a storytelling community within the classroom, a teacher can nurture both self and students into blossoming storytellers. In so doing they will all enter an ancient circle of tradition. This ancient art is their gift for the future. As Vivian Paley concludes in an interview:

> This is what education is all about, is it not, and where do we get it from? Story. It is story that enables us to see things on many levels. It is original scientific thinking, cause and effect, many approaches, many prisms through which you view a single event. The story within the story. (Cunningham, 1993, p. 10)

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Self-portraits of Kindergarten Children

Hilda Present Lewis

In the 120 years since research in children's drawing began, considerable data have been collected and many inferences made about age-related change in drawing and factors to which such change relates. The methodology has, for the most part, been to study sizable groups of children of successive ages, or a single child over a number of years, or children across cultures. The present investigation explores in depth the variation in drawing within a single cohort of kindergarten children from 11 schools districts in California.

Historical Background

Published research into children's drawings begins in 1887. As legend has it, Corrado Ricci, an eminent Italian art historian, was on his way to his office when he was caught in a rainstorm and took shelter under a portico. While waiting for the rain to stop, he noticed charming and enigmatic drawings on the walls which he believed were done by children. He was fascinated by them and resolved to undertake the scientific study of child art.

Child art must surely have existed for centuries before it was recognized as such. The delight of a toddler who spills the cereal and "scribbles" in it or the concentration of a young child drawing lines in wet sand testifies to the child's drive to make visible. Regrettably almost nothing remains of the art work of children of the distant past. Unlike our own times in which art materials for children are everywhere, art materials were not ordinarily available to young children. And if, somehow, they did find something to draw with and something to draw on, the work was not likely to be valued and saved. The making of art was the domain of talented craftsmen who had served long apprenticeships. The child's way of drawing would have been regarded as an error to be suppressed by schooling among the privileged or displaced by productive labor in the less fortunate. The art of a child was not preserved in an age in which childhood itself was seen as a condition to be overcome as soon as possible.

In the years following the publication of Ricci's study, the developmental character of children's drawings was established through research in Europe and the United States. These studies were largely descriptive rather than theoretical. The most significant among them was that of Georg Kerschensteiner, who was given the task of collecting and studying 100,000 drawings made under standardized conditions by school children in Munich in the year 1905. The purpose of the study was to provide a scientific basis for reorganizing drawing instruction in the schools of that city. Kerschensteiner (1905) categorized the drawings of the young children in his study as "Primitive Schematic," "Schematic," and "Mixed Schematic," three levels of a general category called "Schematic." These terms were adopted by researchers who followed and became part of the standard lexicon of research into children's drawings. The drawings of the young children in his sample bear

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a striking resemblance to those in this study, although the youngest child in his study was six years of age, about a year older than those who constitute the present sample.

As Dale Harris (1963) has observed, the early studies were rich in insights into the psychology of children's drawings and furnish a framework for understanding the art of children which has remained valid to this day.

The early descriptive studies of the developmental process in drawing provided the basis for the development of the Goodenough Draw-a-Man test of intelligence, which was published in 1926. In addition to its contribution to intelligence testing, Goodenough's work led the way to the use of children's drawings as a means of gaining insight into personality differences.

The climate of the early twentieth century nourished interest in child art. The art world had become aware of the art of indigenous peoples. The work of Freud on human consciousness and behavior opened new frontiers for writers and artists to explore. The field of child development grew and focused public awareness on the formative power of early experience. Child art began to be seen as a way through which a child might express or communicate something that could not be articulated by other means. Some psychologists viewed child art as a gateway to innermost thoughts and feelings and as an invaluable tool in diagnosis and treatment. Freudian, Jungian, Gestaltist, and Behaviorist schools of psychology each discovered links between their theories and the qualities found in the art of children.

Of the many theories attempting to explain artistic development in childhood, Gestalt psychology is, in my opinion, the most useful. In 1926, the year that Goodenough's work was published in the United States, Gustav Britsch's book, whose title translates into English as *Theory of Pictorial Art*, was published in Munich. Britsch's ideas were brought to the United States by four of his students and attracted considerable attention. Each of them interpreted their teacher's ideas somewhat differently. Victor Lowenfeld (1939, 1952) claims that the value of art activity lies in the opportunity it provides for expressing feelings and that the role of vision in creating art is subordinate to what lies within the child. Sir Herbert Read (1945) says that the belief that the child strives to achieve visual realism is inconsistent with observed facts. Henry Schaefer-Simmern (1948) argues that artistic capacity is a natural attribute of all human beings. Rudolf Arnheim (1954), whose views have much in common with those of Schaefer-Simmern, asserts that pictorial representation by children is not based on the observation of an object from a particular point of view at given moment but, rather, that a drawing renders the structural characteristics of that object with the constraints of the two-dimensional medium. According to Arnheim, development of drawing in children consists in rendering ever more fully the salient characteristics of depicted objects. Put simply, growth is a process in which the child discovers ways to show more and more aspects of whatever is depicted, integrating the new elements into the whole. The present investigation is guided by Arnheim's theory.

Previous investigations of artistic development in children charted change

over the years in an individual child, as in Hildreth's study of her nephew (1941), and Fein's study of her daughter (1976), or, alternatively, studied large groups of children of sequential ages at a particular moment in time, as did Kerchensteiner (1905) and many others. In recent years there has been considerable interest in cross-cultural and multicultural research in children's drawings. My own study (Lewis, 1993) is one example. The value of these approaches can not be disputed. However, the variation within the drawings of a group of children who are the same age and live in the same geographical area has yet to be explored.

We know from previous research that most, if not all, kindergarten children will be found to draw at what previous researchers have called the "Schematic" stage. But we have scant information about the range and character of the variations to be found within that classification beyond the three levels of "Primitive Schematic," "Schematic," and "Mixed Schematic." The present investigation seeks to fill this gap in our knowledge of artistic development in children.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the nature and range of variation in the self-portraits of kindergarten children who are classmates in eleven school districts in California.

Sample

The sample to be analyzed consists of 344 self-portraits by kindergarten children created in November, 1999. Each child was asked individually by the teacher to create a self-portrait. The child was provided with paper and a black marker and was free to work whenever he or she chose.

All of the 344 drawings discussed below show the child in an empty space. Seventy-one additional drawings, in which the child drew him or herself in a setting, such as next to a tree, will be analyzed in a separate study.

Data Analysis and Findings

The 344 drawings were sorted into categories based on shared characteristics within each group and distinctions among groups. Using this criterion each one of 247 drawings was assigned to a group with which it had structural affinity. Ninety-seven drawings were one-of-a-kind and did not fit into any of these groups. Representative drawings from each group are shown and discussed below.

Although some children enter kindergarten when they are at the scribbling stage or have progressed only to drawing of circles, every child in this sample had gone beyond this first stage to the Schematic stage. The presentation of data follows the levels of the general Schematic stage: Primitive Schematic, Schematic, and Mixed Schematic. The category of "Tadpoles" under Primitive Schematic Drawings has been found by other researchers; however, the categories described under Schematic Drawings and Mixed Schematic Drawings arose from the analysis of the present data.

Primitive Schematic Drawings

Tadpoles

Early research studies have dubbed the child's first recognizable attempts to represent the human figure "tadpoles." They have also been called *cephalopods*

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(headfoots), *hommes-tetards* (head men), and *Kopffussler* (head-footers). Although none of these terms is quite right, "tadpoles" is probably the best in that it suggests that over time and through natural processes of growth a mature form is destined to evolve. Thirty drawings in this sample are classified as tadpoles. Figure 1 is a classic tadpole — a head to which two vertical lines are attached. The two lines represent the entire body, not just the legs. In Figure 1 the child has added circular forms at the bottom to denote feet. Of the 30 tadpole figures, eight do not indicate arms; arms are indicated in the remaining 22 cases. In 13 of these cases, arms are attached to what can be assumed to be the head, as in Figure 2. At first this seems to be bizarre, but then remember that the circle was at first used to represent the entire person.

Figure 1.

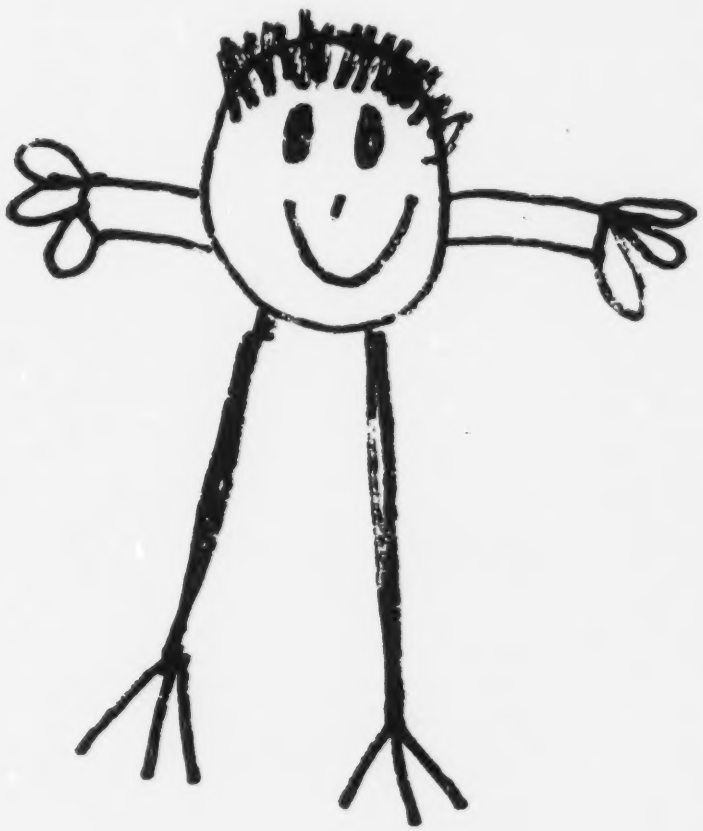

Figure 2.

In eight cases the arms are attached to the vertical "body" lines as in Figure 3. Figure 4 is unusual in that it shows arms attached below the ears and no vertical lines indicate a body. None of the 30 drawings have any indication of clothing. Notice that all these examples show the ubiquitous "smiley face" found in almost all the drawings in the study. Schaefer-Simmern has said that the child does not mean to suggest a happy person but that the upturned mouth follows the shape of the head. Notice, too, the differences in showing the feet and hands.

Figure 3.

Figure 4.

Schematic Drawings

Triangular Torsos

By drawing a horizontal line between the two lines which radiate from the head, the figure can be differentiated into a torso and legs, as seen in Figure 5. The triangular torso appears in 33 drawings. Arms appear in all of these drawings. Notice that in Figures 6 and 7 the arms parallel to the floor. In Figure 8 they are perpendicular to the outline

Figure 5.

Figure 6.

Figure 7.

Figure 8.

of the torso. Figure 9 shows the only instance in this category of arms that are not symmetric. Figures 6, 7, and 9 indicate clothing by shapes or designs within the outline of the body. Notice the different hairstyles, the different ways the hands are drawn, and how the five children whose drawings are shown, each in his or her own way, show the feet. As Arnheim has pointed out, the challenge in drawing is to find a way to show the three-dimensional world on a two-dimensional surface. An adult artist could rely on foreshortening to show that the feet come forward. The young child and even much older children can only show the feet as though from the side, its most characteristic aspect, or from above. Children often show feet pointing in the same direction, as in Figure 8, or at 180 degrees, apparently with no concern at all that the body and head face front.

Rectangular Torsos

Twenty-nine drawings have a rectangular or square torso. A surprising finding is that in all 29 drawings a line begins at the head, defines the torso, and continues downward to become legs, as shown in Figure 10. To my knowledge this finding has not been

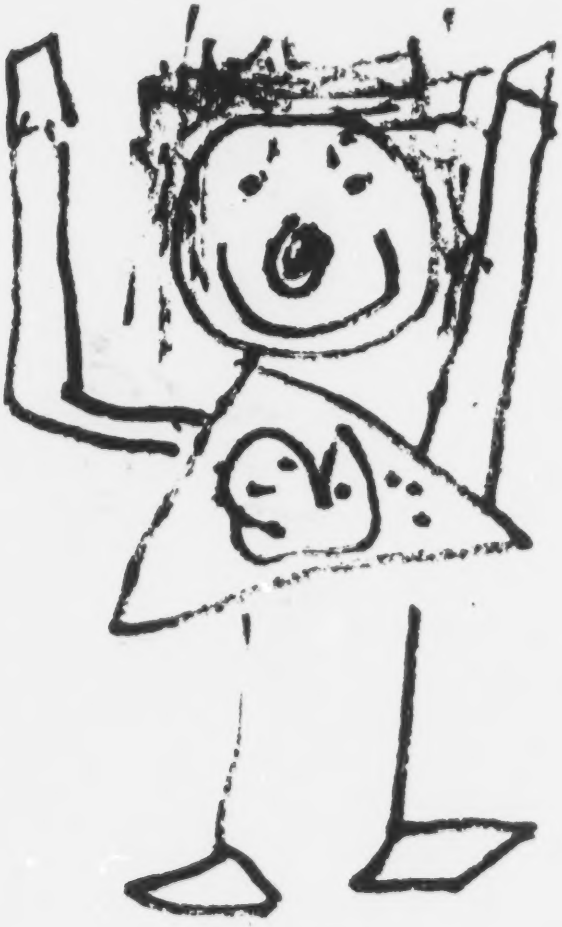

Figure 9.

Figure 10.

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previously reported in the literature.

Unlike the group of triangular bodies, in which the arms are always present, three drawings show no arms. In four instances the arms originate at the head, as in Figure 12. In the remaining drawings, the arms are joined to the vertical line of the body, most frequently at about a 90-degree angle.

Figure 11.

Figure 12.

Rounded Torsos

In 22 drawings the torso is drawn as a circle, ellipse, or oval and is attached to the head. In all instances the arms are shown, radiating from the body, as in Figure 13, or parallel to the floor as in Figures 14 and 15. Notice the size relationships of the parts of the body in Figure 15. It has been observed that children seem to concentrate on the part they are drawing at the moment and do not stop to think about size relationships among the parts. In Figure 16 clothes are emphatically expressed by patterned fabric, a belt, and laced shoes.

The Neck

The reader may have noticed that a neck never appears in any of the figures shown above. None of the 114 drawings that are exemplified by these figures show a neck. Indicating a neck is a step forward in the process of differentiation, which equates to developmental progress. The triangular body disappears when the neck appears.

A neck does appear in 203 drawings. Some of these drawings are structured in ways similar to those above. However, separation of the torso from the head opens the way to new possibilities.

Figure 13.

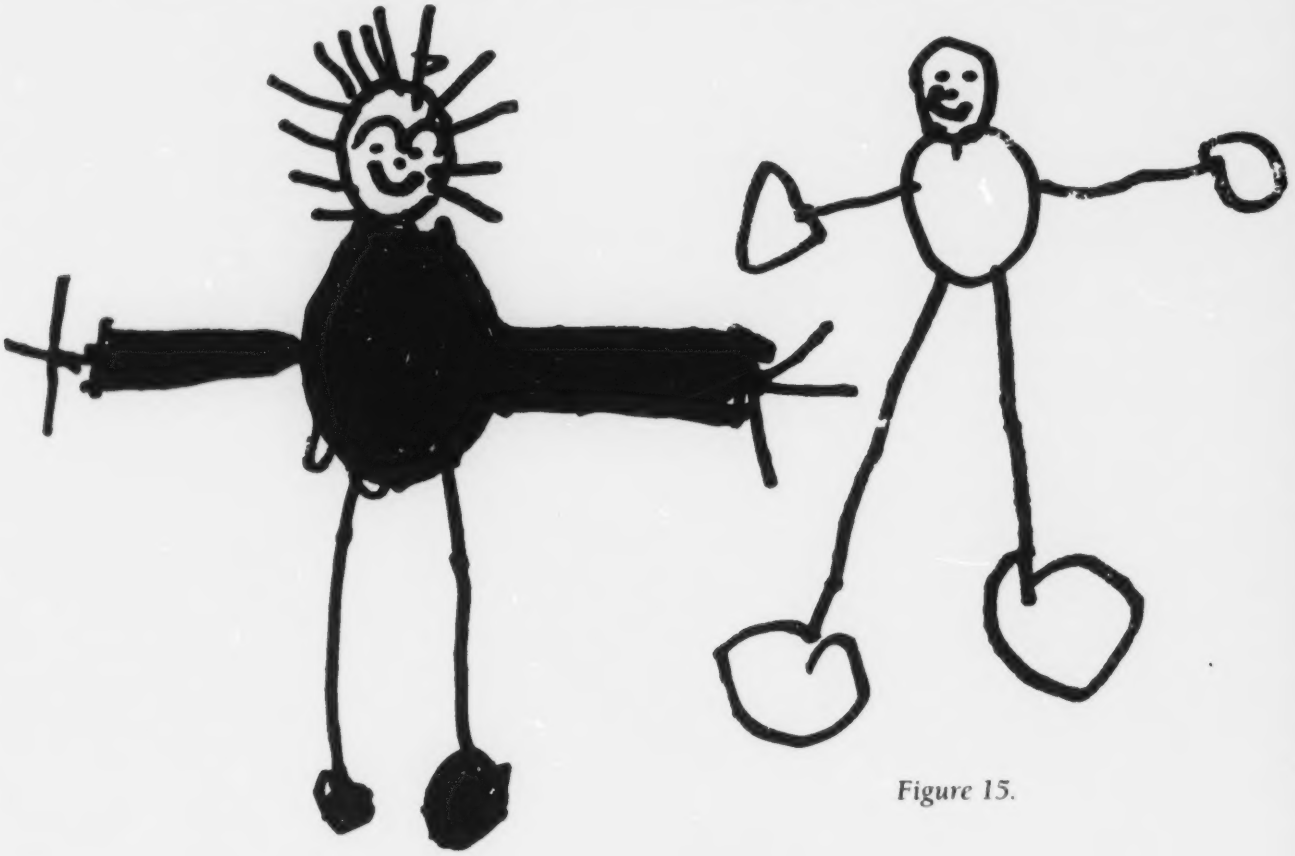

Figure 14.

Figure 15.

Figure 16.

Necks and Rectangular Torsos

Only six drawings show a neck joined to a rectangular torso. In Figure 15 the legs are an extension of the sides of the square, whereas in Figure 17 they descend from the bottom of the square. Notice the way in which the hands, and, surprisingly, the feet are indicated in Figure 16. Both hands and feet are shown in the same way. In Figure 17 the fingers radiate from a circular hand in the manner of the ubiquitous "sun figure."

Necks and Round Torsos

A neck appears somewhat more frequently in figures that show the torso as a circle, oval, or a shape that resembles an ellipse and has one straight side. The straight side is at the bottom in two cases and at the top in another. In the 17 drawings in this category, a round head is connected to the torso by a neck whose length is exaggerated. See Figures 18, 19, and 20. In Figure 18 single lines radiate from a circular body to indicate arms, neck, and legs. In Figure 19 the arms and legs are enclosed shapes that taper towards the body. In Figure 20 the girl appears to be wearing a dress, which is appropriately straight at the bottom.

Figure 17.

Figure 18.

Figure 19.

Figure 20.

Cruciforms

Seventeen drawings show the neck, arms, and torso drawn by a continuous line in the shape of a cross. Hands are added to the outstretched arms; legs and feet are shown at the bottom. Figure 21 captures a striking individuality in the features and expression of the face. Figure 22 is a pleasant version of a typical face with dots for eyes and nose and the omnipresent "smiley" mouth. In Figure 23, as in previous drawings, there is no concern for relative size among the parts of the figure.

Figure 21.

Figure 22.

Figure 23.

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Portrait Heads

Although almost all of the self-portraits in this study show the entire figure, five children opted to draw only the head and some facial features. All of the five drawings were executed with sufficient skill and imagination to suggest that the child was easily capable of a more extensive depiction but chose to represent him or herself by a portrait head. In the three portraits shown, Figures 24, 25, and 26, a few strokes manage to convey the individuality of each child.

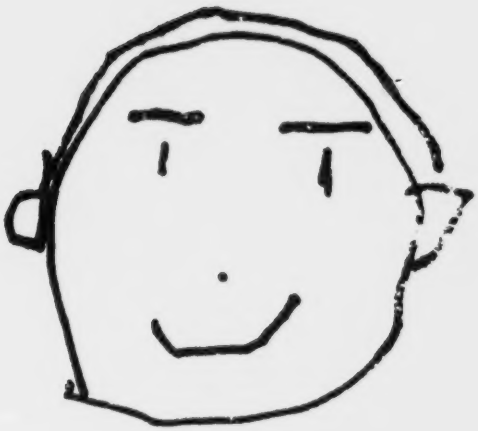

Figure 24.

Figure 25.

Figure 26.

Stick Figures

Although people who are not familiar with children's drawings sometimes characterize them as stick figures, such drawings are infrequent. There are only 10 of them in this study. It is interesting that three of them, two of which are shown here, depict the child at play. Play activity was not evident in any of the other drawings. Almost all the stick figures were constructed as shown in Figures 27, 28, and 29.

Figure 27.

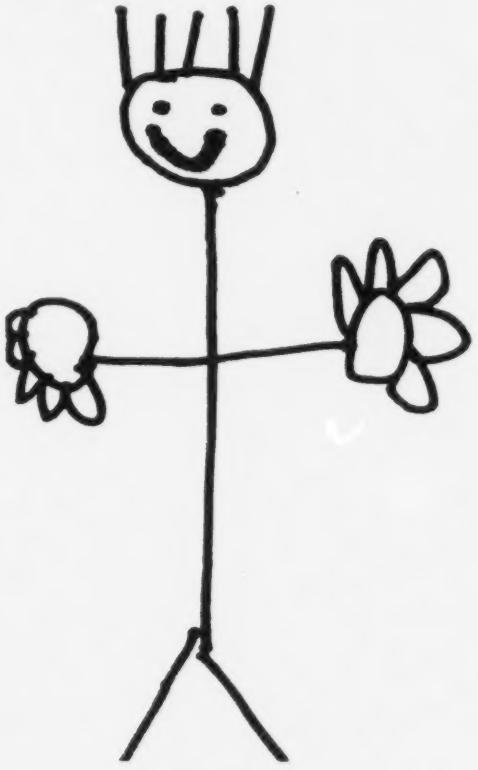

Figure 28.

Figure 29.

Transparency

The term "transparency" is used in the literature of child art to refer to drawings in which the viewer is able to see what lies beneath an opaque surface. Some children first draw a body and then draw the clothes over it. It may be that the familiar act of drawing the body helps the child to understand how to draw the clothes. Figure 30 shows one of the five instances of transparency in this study.

Profiles

Only one of the drawings could possibly be considered a profile. Figure 31 shows both arms on the same side of the figure. The head, however, faces front.

Figure 30.

Figure 31.

Movement

The figures considered so far do not indicate movement. The bodies show no flexibility, and only in Figure 12, seen on page 117, is a limb bent. It appears paradoxical that at an age when children are so active they almost never show movement in their drawings. At age five very few children are able to communicate motion through visual means. In this study only 13 children did so. In these drawings motion is suggested by the bending or positioning of the limbs or both the limbs and torso. Figure 32 suggests a bull-fighter entering the arena. Figure 33 seems to be someone waving good-bye. In Figures 34 and 35, the body and limbs are bent in a manner that suggests dancing.

Figure 32.

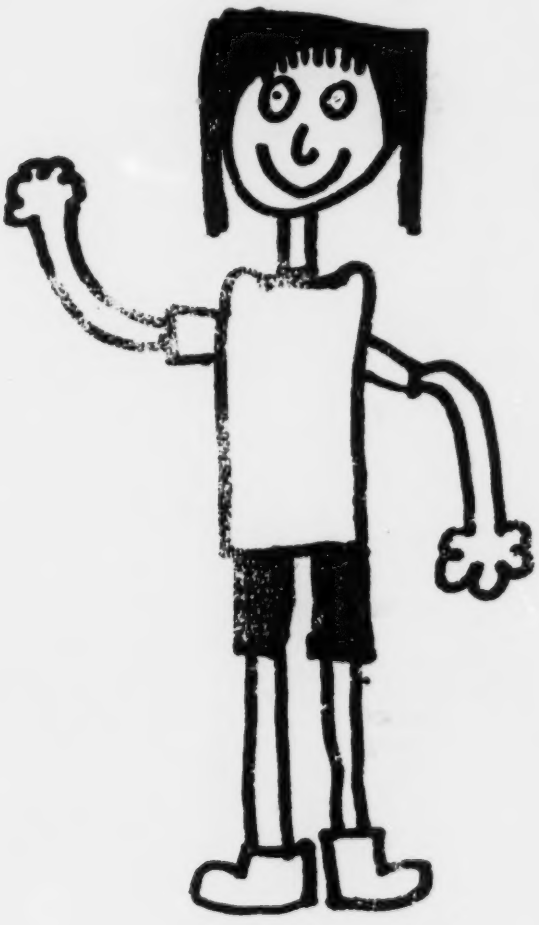

Figure 33.

Figure 34.

Figure 35.

Personality

Although every drawing is unique, a few drawings suggest that the child is intentionally describing his or her own personality or ideal. Of the 28 drawings in this category, 25 are of girls and three are of boys. The drawings of girls typically accentuate the cultural cliches of feminine allure. Among Figures 35, 37, 38, and 39, we see oversized lips drawn as if by lipstick, eyelashes lengthened as though by mas-

Figure 36.

Figure 37.

Figure 38.

Figure 39.

cara, stylish hair, and elaborate costumes. Figure 40, which is probably of a boy, shows a ferocious person — bared teeth, protruding ears, feet with very large toes or possibly flippers, and a distinctive costume. By contrast Figure 41 shows a sweet and proper girl.

Figure 40.

Figure 41.

Proportion

As the child works on a drawing, he or she seems to focus on each part separately. It appears that size relationships among the parts of the body is often of little or no concern, as evidenced in many of the previous figures. Figures 42, 43, and 44 are three of five figures in which proportion is greatly distorted for reasons known only to the child artist. The size of the feet are exaggerated in Figures 42 and 43. Figure 44 shows enormous teeth and tiny arms.

Figure 42.

Figure 43.

Figure 44.

Mavericks and Oddities

Although 247 drawings fit comfortably into the above categories, 97 drawings are unique and do not fit into any category. Figures 45 through 51 are examples of such drawings. The reader is invited to make his or her own analysis.

Figure 45.

Figure 46.

Figure 47.

Figure 48.

Figure 49.

Figure 50.

Figure 51.

Mixed Schematic Drawings

Moving Towards Realism

As children mature they become aware of the discrepancy between the appearance of the world around them as they see it and the way in which they have been representing it in their drawings. They strive for greater realism. The term "True-to-Appearance" in this context, however, refers to the child's desire, not to his or her accomplishment. Twenty-two drawings in this study go beyond the purely schematic. The five drawings shown here indicate progress toward a more realistic portrayal of the child-artist. In Figure 54 the child has indicated shoulders and has attempted without complete success to show how the unrealistically thin arms are attached. In Figure 52 the body is drawn with a continuous line. In 55 arms overlap the body. In all of these figures, all body parts—head, torso, arms, hands, legs, and feet--are included. Size relationships, however, seem to be determined by other considerations. Notice the hair in Figure 52, the feet in Figure 53, and the mouth in Figure 56.

Figure 52.

Figure 53.

Figure 54.

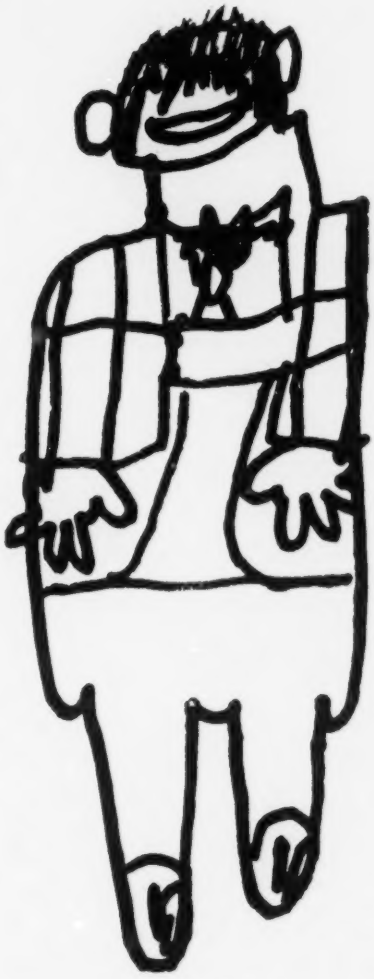

Figure 55.

Figure 56.

Conclusions

The data revealed one category of the primitive schematic level, that of tadpoles, similar to that of previous research. The data also revealed 15 categories of the schematic level drawings, which points to variations within this developmental level. These categories have not been discussed previously in research. The triangular torsos, the rectangular torsos, the rounded torsos, and the cruciforms represent parallel development, since the forms are at the same level of depicting the body. The differentiation of the body to establish the neck, as in these data, represents an advance in development within the schematic level. The change in differentiation from primitive schematic to schematic to mixed schematic, of course, reflects successive developmental levels.

Summary

This study describes, compares, and analyzes 344 self-portraits of kindergarten children created in November, 1999. In so doing it departs from long established research designs which either document change over time in the work of an individual child or compare the art work of a coherent group of children at successive ages or grade levels at a given time and place.

The present investigation examines the drawings of a single cohort, children in the third month of the kindergarten year from 11 school districts in California public schools. The focus is on variation found in the drawings of these children, all of whom share a common approach. All of the 344 self-portraits that are exemplified in this report are "schematic," as were the young children's drawings that came to the attention of scholars over a hundred years ago. As in previous studies, the drawings exemplify different levels within the schematic category, from "tadpole" to "schematic" to "mixed schematic" drawings, which still rely on the outline, that is, the schema, but also evidence a concern for visual verisimilitude and attest to the possession of sufficient drawing skills to progress towards greater realism.

As noted above, in previous investigations developmental progress was charted by a chronological arrangement of the drawings of an individual child or by sampling drawings of children at successive ages or grade levels. In the present investigation, all the drawings were by children at the same age and grade level. Therefore a developmental sequence had to be inferred by the way the drawings were constructed. The change from "tadpoles" to "schematic" to "mixed schematic" clearly defines progress. Based on Arnheim's view that developmental progress consists in rendering ever more fully the salient characteristics of depicted objects, I concluded that the shape of the torso, be it a triangle, a circular form, a rectangle, or a cruciform, represents parallel developmental paths, that is, they are at the same level of differentiation in showing the body. However, the appearance of the neck is a step forward in the differentiation of the human figure, for it denotes an additional part of the body.

For me the drawings in this study are a source of delight. I hope that the reader will, from time to time, revisit them, make discoveries, and find pleasure in them as one does with authentic works of art. For the researcher the lesson to be drawn is that cross-sectional

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comparisons of the characteristics of children's drawings can and do yield developmental regularities. But we should never lose sight of the incredible variations apparent within a developmental level and the potential for deeper theoretical understandings that continued study of such variations promise.

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Notes

I am indebted to the teachers in whose kindergartens the drawings were created and to the following teachers for their patience in explaining their educational philosophy and teaching methods to me. Thank you Laura Darcy, Marie Dorsey, Peg McNeil, and Leigh Scott. I also wish to express my appreciation to Pat Rees-Miller whose idea it was to incorporate the drawings into the decoration for the Christmas tree in Davies Symphony Hall in San Francisco, where they came to my attention. I am grateful to the California Kindergarten Association, under whose auspices the drawings were displayed, for facilitating my use of the drawings.

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Collecting and Processing Words: Strategies for Building Vocabulary in Young Children

Michael Jordan and Adrienne Herrell

Research has found a significant relationship between reading achievement and vocabulary knowledge. In order for children to gain an ample vocabulary, word study needs to start in preschool and kindergarten, where children can be actively engaged in the exploration of vocabulary words. In the program "Collecting Words," young children are encouraged to collect and process new words in order to build their speaking, listening and writing vocabularies. The collecting of the words is done as a class activity. The words are collected on charts in the classroom and displayed for the children's use. They are encouraged to act out and use the words in as many different ways as possible and report back to the class the ways in which they found to use the new words. The children's word processing (usage of the words in various contexts) is documented through a double entry journal either written by the child or dictated to the teacher. Additionally, words from a piece of literature may be explored through much the same processes.

Entering kindergarteners, Matthew and Connor, are about the same size and appear bright-eyed and eager to learn. Matthew is very quiet, and when he speaks, he uses few words. "Me go bathroom?" he may ask. He may use "crayon?" to request a crayon. Connor, on the other hand, speaks in complete sentences and provides a running commentary to almost everything he does. "I went to the zoo on Sunday and we saw some big giraffes and the elephant was humongous," he says, enthusiastically as he builds a zoo with blocks and miniature animals.

Both boys are bright and have interested parents at home. They have both heard English spoken as the first language of the home. What has made the difference in their spoken vocabulary?

Vocabulary development has been widely researched. In the past twenty years, there have been a number of research studies examining the development of word knowledge in children and the impact of vocabulary knowledge on student achievement. As a result of the vocabulary acquisition research, three main implications for instruction have been recognized: (1) there is a wide range of vocabulary understood by students, of any age, (2) there are great differences in vocabulary knowledge between low- and high- achieving students, and (3) a sustained focus on oral and written vocabulary acquisition within the reading/language arts program is a vital part of supporting children's success in literacy. Several researchers have proposed evidence that strongly links vocabulary deficiencies to academic failure in disadvantaged students in grades three to twelve. Although there is no evidence that any single method of teaching vocabulary is superior, many comprehensive programs for supporting

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vocabulary acquisition have produced positive results (Stanovich, 1986; White, Graves, & Slater, 1990). For this reason, teachers of reading and language arts are well advised to incorporate daily vocabulary acquisition strategies into their programs.

Closely related to vocabulary size is the emphasis on vocabulary growth across the grade levels. Research in vocabulary size and growth (Nagy & Anderson, 1984; Beck & McKeown, 1991) estimates that by learning 3,000 new words a year, students will develop vocabularies which will equal those of high-achieving students. Acquiring 3,000 new words a year breaks down to approximately 8 new words per day. However, teachers must be very cautious not to confuse "fast-mapping," the very cursory understanding of words encountered in context, with "extended mapping," the full understanding of a word's meaning (Carey, 1978). To accomplish extending mapping, students must have a variety of exposures to words in multiple contexts over time. It is estimated that school-age students are processing approximately 1,600 words in various stages of understanding at any one time. Strategies used in the classroom must support this continuous vocabulary processing and acquisition in order to facilitate optimum vocabulary knowledge in students.

The interdependence between reading achievement and vocabulary knowledge is very strong (Simmons & Kameenui, 1990). Strong readers in twelfth grade were found to possess extended mapping of four times the number of words when compared to weak readers at the same grade level. In addition, strong readers at the third grade level have been found to possess extended mapping of approximately the same number of words as weak readers at the twelfth grade level (Beck & McKeown, 1991). The vocabulary knowledge, reading success relationship is reciprocal; students with rich vocabularies comprehend more fully. Students who read and comprehend well increase their vocabularies through more extensive reading. Teachers of reading must find ways to enhance the vocabulary and reading strategies of their students in order to harness this strong relationship.

In order to start students on the right track toward the building of a rich store of vocabulary knowledge, word study must begin as early as possible. Even preschool and kindergarten students can be actively engaged in the exploration of vocabulary words. It is just a matter of adjusting word study to their developmental level and making sure that the words are taught in context and supported with movement and multiple encounters with the words over time. One word study strategy appropriate for young children is collecting words.

Collecting words (Herrell & Jordan, in press) is a strategy for helping children develop better speaking and writing vocabularies. It also serves to support their understanding of the nuances of words that have the same or similar meanings. Research clearly indicates that the development of extensive vocabulary and understanding of word meanings is essential to successful and fluid comprehension in reading and verbal interactions (Allen, 2000). By "collecting" words, students are constantly building a repertoire of words and word meanings that will serve to increase their understanding of oral language as well as stories. Because the teacher pro-

vides "scaffolding" to clarify word meanings and connect new words to existing knowledge, collecting words helps students to improve and strengthen their spoken vocabulary and eventually their writing skills.

Collecting words involves making charts of words encountered by the children as they listen to or read stories or as they listen to and participate in conversations. The charting of the words serves to support the children's understanding of the word meanings as they are categorized, acted out or connected to objects and context. The word charts provide a record of the words students acquire as they add to the collections, as well as acting as a reference for themselves and other students. As children locate and add words to the charts, they are responsible for helping others understand the meanings and nuances of the new words. This may be accomplished through simple explanations, or may require more elaborate picturization such as drawing, miming, or acting out to demonstrate the word meanings.

While the words are being collected on charts within the classroom, the children are engaged in finding ways to process or use the new words. As they encounter new words, the children are encouraged to find ways to use the words and report back about their use of these words in speech or writing to the teacher and other students. The teacher must also find ways to model the new vocabulary in such a way that the children are made explicitly aware of the usage and encouraged to "follow in his or her footsteps" and make their own attempts to incorporate the new vocabulary into their oral and written language. This "celebration of new words" can be a fun and exciting way for the teacher and the children to explore new vocabulary in the classroom together. The teacher must set aside some time each day for word study, with part of this time spent discussing the ways in which the new words have been used by the children and the teacher. In kindergarten and beginning first grade, this is done orally or by having the teacher take the children's dictation to document the word usage in a double entry journal created by the class. As the children are able to write for themselves, they take over the writing of the journal. See Figure 1 for an example of a double entry word journal.

Word	The ways we used it
Tiptoe	Miss McCloskey said, "Please tiptoe to your seats."
Parade	"We look like a parade when we walk with our heads and knees held high," said Miss Vang.

Figure 1: A double-entry word journal.

A Kindergarten Class Collects and Processes Words

To introduce her kindergarten/first grade class to word study, Miss McCloskey asks them to stand up and walk around the classroom in a circle. "Now I want you to tiptoe around the room," she says as the children immediately get up on their tiptoes and continue around in the circle. Even her English language learners respond quickly because they see what the others are doing. To reinforce the connection of the new word to their actions,

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Miss McCloskey begins a quiet chant. "Tiptoe, tiptoe, tiptoe," she chants softly and rhythmically as the children begin to join in while they continue around the circle. "Now let's parade. Lift your head and your knees up high as you pretend to be in a parade. Parade, parade, parade," the chant changes as the children get into the parade mode. Miss McCloskey continues to change the commands a few more times and then asks the children to sit down in the circle. She says, "We have been walking in many different ways today. Who can remember all the ways we walked?"

"I know," says Moua as she raises her hand. "We tiptoed."

"Yes, we tiptoed," confirms Miss McCloskey as she writes the word on the big chart she has beside her seat. "Moua, can you show us how to tiptoe?"

Moua gets up quickly and tiptoes around the edge of the carpet. The children softly begin to chant, "Tiptoe, tiptoe, tiptoe."

Miss McCloskey continues to add words to the chart as the children remember all the ways in which they walked. She asks the children to demonstrate their words as they contribute them to the chart.

"Now, I want to tell you a secret," Miss McCloskey says very quietly. "If you want these words to be your words, you have to find ways to use them. All day today I want you to remember to use the words we have written on our word chart. Do you see what I wrote at the top? What does it say?"

"I know," says Marco, one of the first graders. "It says 'ways to walk'."

"That's exactly right," says Miss McCloskey with a smile. "We found five different ways to walk today. Let's read them together." As she points to each word, the children read," Tiptoe, parade, prowl, march, stomp."

"Before we go home today, we will have time for you to tell me about the ways you found to use these five words today," reminds Miss McCloskey.

All during the day Miss McCloskey finds ways to use the words on the word collection chart. She asks the children to parade into line for recess. She has them prowl down the hall to lunch. They tiptoe to their literacy centers and march to the music during their P.E. activity time. At the end of the day, she gathers the group together to start their word study journal. She shows the class a piece of chart paper divided into a "T" chart. She writes *"Word"* over the left side of the "T" and *"Ways we used it"* over the right side of the chart.

"This is our word journal," says Miss McCloskey. "We are going to celebrate all the ways we used our new words today. Who found a way to use one of the words?"

"I did!" says Tonio. "I told Miss Vang that I was going to prowl over and get a drink."

"Very good, Tonio," says Miss McCloskey. "You used the word 'prowl' so I write it under the word 'word' on our chart." She writes *"prowl"* on the left side of the "T" chart. "And you said, 'I am going to prowl over and get a drink.'" Miss McCloskey writes, "Tonio said, 'I am going to prowl over and get a drink.'" She says the words very slowly as she writes them so that all the children can see how to write the words. She continues to ask the children to talk about the ways in which they used the new words, and she writes the words

and the ways in which they were used on the "T" chart or double entry word journal.

"Now," she says after many of the words have been written on the word journal chart, "When you go home today, I want you to continue to practice using your new words. Remember how you use them so we can add your words to the chart tomorrow. Also, I want you to be thinking of other ways to walk so we can practice walking in even more different ways tomorrow and add some more new words to the chart."

Miss McCloskey's class builds their word collections and word journal each day. Before long they have collections of words for *walk*, *talk*, *smells*, *sounds*, *tastes*, *toys*, *flowers*, *clothes*, *food*, and *drinks*. And it is not long before the children are keeping their own word journals, with the first graders and kindergartners working together to make the entries. Of course, Miss McCloskey and her aide are very happy to take their dictation if they are needed.

Miss McCloskey is very pleased with the progress the children are making as they build their vocabularies through word collections and word processing. She is especially pleased with the progress of her English language learners, who benefit enormously from this active approach to word study.

Miss Benninghoven's first graders are listening to her read *Fritz and the Beautiful Horses* (Brett, 1981). Because her class has a number of English language learners and children with limited English vocabularies, Miss. B. wants to make sure that they all understand the words in the book. After she reads the book once, Miss. B. reads it a second time, stopping to involve the children in acting out the movement words. When the horses in the story prance, she gets the children up on their feet and they practice prancing. When the horses in the story parade, she and the children parade. Because Jan Brett's story contains so many descriptive movement words, the children have several opportunities to get up and move.

Once Miss B. has read through the book a second time and the children have all acted out the movement words, she has them form a circle around the outside edges of the classroom, and Miss B. holds up cards with the movement words written on them. As she holds up *buck*, the children show how horses *buck*. They move around the classroom in a clockwise direction responding to each new movement word as it is displayed.

After the children have several more chances to act out the words from the story, Miss B. asks them to return to their desks and she explains the next thing they will do.

"I am going to give each table five words from our story. I want you to work together and each group to write a short play using the words I give you. Each group will have a recorder and a leader. You are all to help write the play. You may use the art materials to make props and then you will have a chance to practice your skits and perform them for the class. Your play has to include the words you are given but it doesn't have to be about horses. You can use the words in any way that makes sense."

"Before you work in groups, let's try a play together so you can see how it is done. Let's use the words, *prance*, *parade*, *shy*, *stride*, and *cracked*. Can you

think of a setting for our play?" asks Miss B.

"We could be at a parade," suggests Thomas.

"Good idea, Thomas," nods Miss B. "That uses one of our words in a new way."

"The narrator can say that we are at a parade," says Jimmy.

"Good," says Miss B. as she writes on the overhead projector **NARRATOR: The children are at a parade**.

"The trick dogs can be prancing and the trainers can be cracking their whips," suggests Lydia.

"Good idea. You've used the words in a new way, not just like they were used in the book. You're really getting the idea," replies Miss B. The class negotiates the sentence together and Miss B. writes the sentence they agree on. **NARRATOR: As the children watch, the trick dogs prance by. The trainer cracked the whip over their heads.**

"How can we use the word *stride*? Miss B. asks.

"That's hard," replies Jose. "The dogs can't stride. Maybe the trainer can do it."

"Oh! I know!" says Ramon excitedly. "We can add it to the last sentence. The trainer can stride as he cracks his whip."

"O.K." agrees Miss B., and with the children's help she changes the sentence to say, *As the children watch, the trick dogs prance by. The trainer strides alongside them, cracking his whip over their heads.*

"Is that all right?" asks Ramon. "Our word was *cracked* and you changed it to *cracking*."

"I'm glad you noticed that," says Miss B. with a smile. "I think that's O.K. You can change the endings as long as the root word, the main part of the word, stays the same. That makes it a little easier."

"Now, how are we going to act this out as a play?" asks Miss B.

"That's easy," replies Thomas. "We have some people be dogs, one person be the trainer, and the rest of the people are the children. One person gets to be the narrator."

Miss B. divides the class up and they walk through the play several times, taking turns playing different parts.

"Now I think you are ready to do this on your own," says Miss B. She divides the class into small groups making sure each small group has a strong reader and writer in it. She distributes word cards to each group and they get started on writing their plays.

After the children have a chance to perform their plays, Miss B. will review the meanings of the words they have used and the many different ways they found to use them. She will punch holes in the corner of the word cards, and they will be kept together as a collection from *Fritz and the Beautiful Horses*. Over the year, the word collections based on stories they read will grow almost daily. Miss B. stores the word collections on hooks placed under the chalkboard, and each collection has a picture of the storybook on the first card so that the children can remember the book they read to create the word collection. This system also serves to help the children find the words as they want to access them for writing projects.

Conclusion

In returning to the opening question as to why children arrive at

kindergarten with such a wide range of vocabulary knowledge, we see that a number of factors play into the picture. Children who have had limited exposure to rich verbal interaction find themselves struggling with new words and even familiar words used in new contexts. The introduction of explicit vocabulary study activities and active role play serve to provide the students opportunities to acquire and internalize new words and word usages. In order to move students from a superficial understanding of vocabulary (fast mapping) to a more in-depth conceptual knowledge (extended mapping), it is necessary to give them multiple exposures in a variety of formats or modes. This should include practical applications to bring "real life" understanding to the word meanings and contextual frameworks. The classroom examples given in this article explore a variety of vocabulary activities that may be used with students to ensure their movement toward the extended mapping which will support their success in all areas of the curriculum. The most effective application of these scaffolding strategies for young children involves their active participation, along with that of the teacher, in order to provide a strong physical connection to aid in internalizing vocabulary.

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Emergent Literacy in Kindergarten:

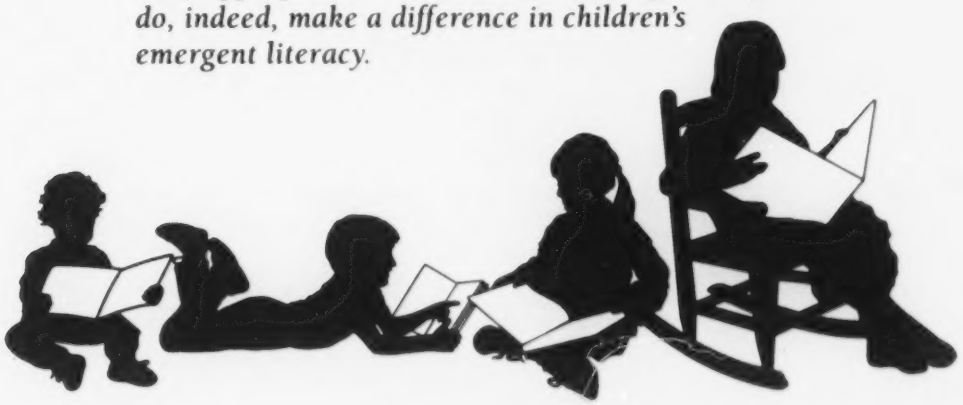
A Review of the Research and Related Suggested Activities and Learning Strategies

by Violet B. Robinson, Gretchen Ross, and Harriet C. Neal

This book on emergent literacy is for early childhood teachers, reading specialists, administrators, university and college professors, and students in teacher education courses. The focus of the book is on children four and five years of age who are in kindergarten and preschool.

After an explanation of literacy requiring a change from the oral to the written register, the authors review research on register, reading comprehension, phonological processing, and writing. A later chapter includes recommended activities and learning strategies.

As a result of the research review, the authors conclude: *Books, dramatic play, explicit instruction of phonological processing, writing and inventive spelling experienced through developmentally appropriate activities and learning strategies do, indeed, make a difference in children's emergent literacy.*



Chapter Titles

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Chapter 2 – Register From the Oral to the Written Register

Chapter 3 – Development of Reading Comprehension

Chapter 4 – Development of Phonological Processing

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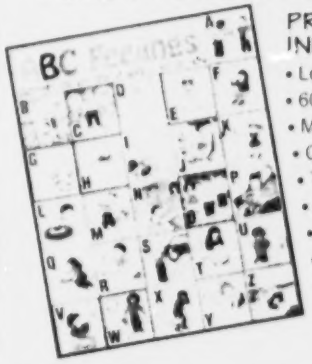

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